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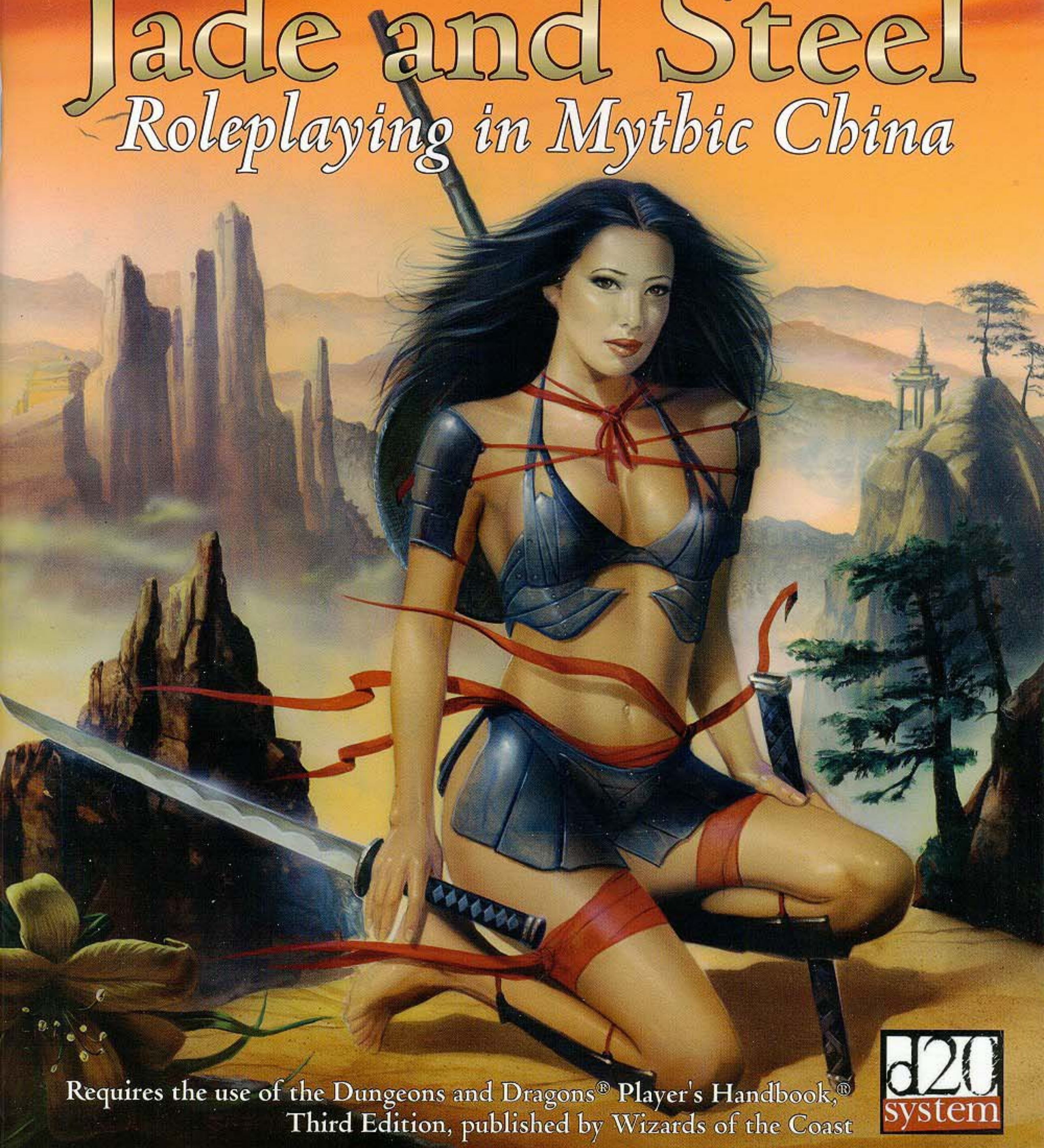
Jade and Steel

Roleplaying in Mythic China



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d20 system

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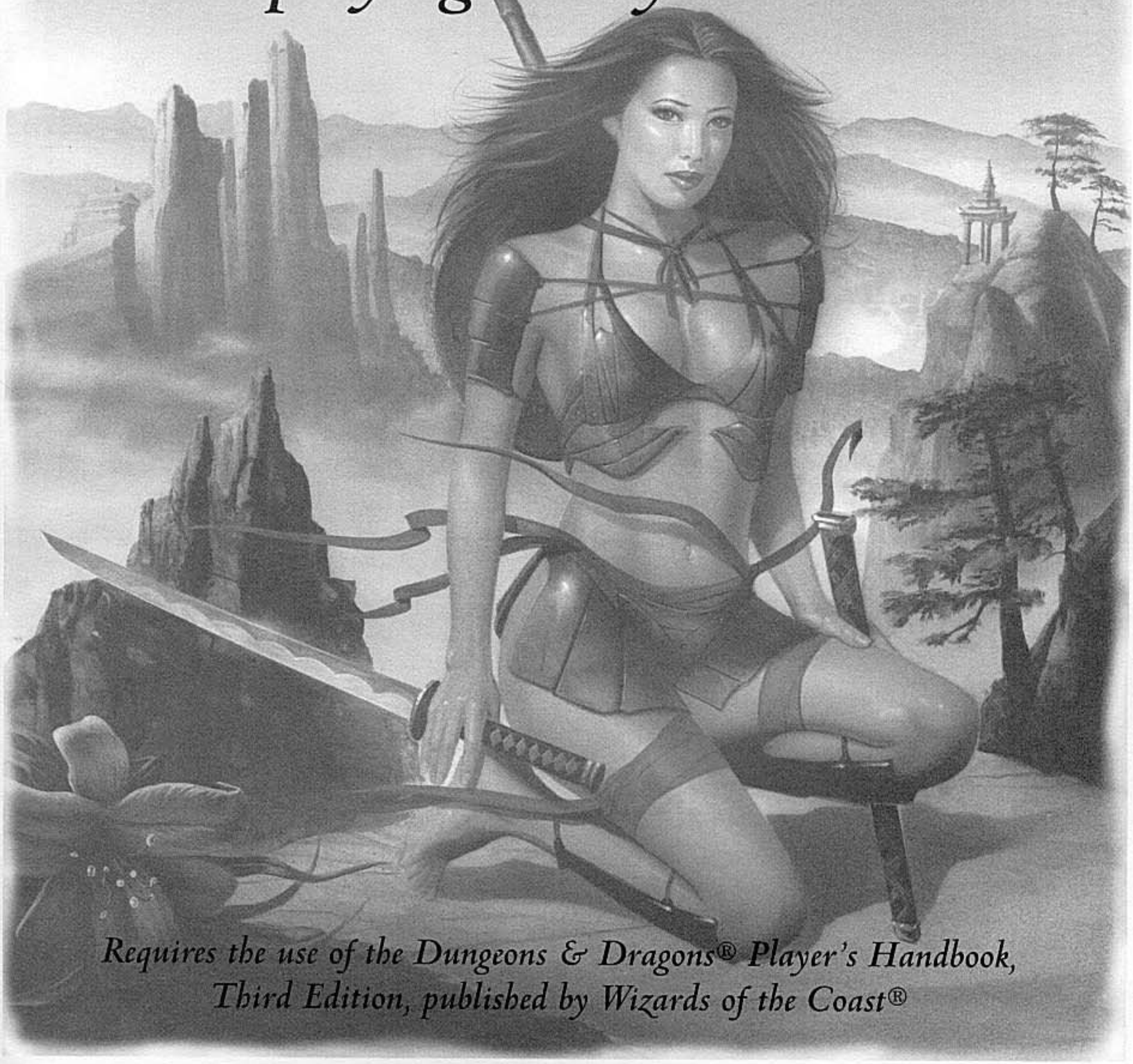

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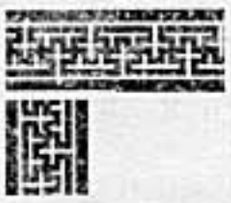
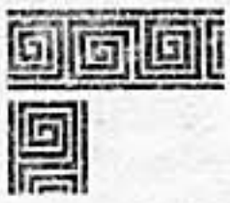
The Open Game Content in this book includes game rules, character and creature statistics, and similar material using the D20 system. This content is denoted by its placement in 

bordered-style sidebars and by text highlighted in ***bold italic*** type within the main body of the text. In addition, all of Part Two is considered Open game content. The remaining material, including that in 

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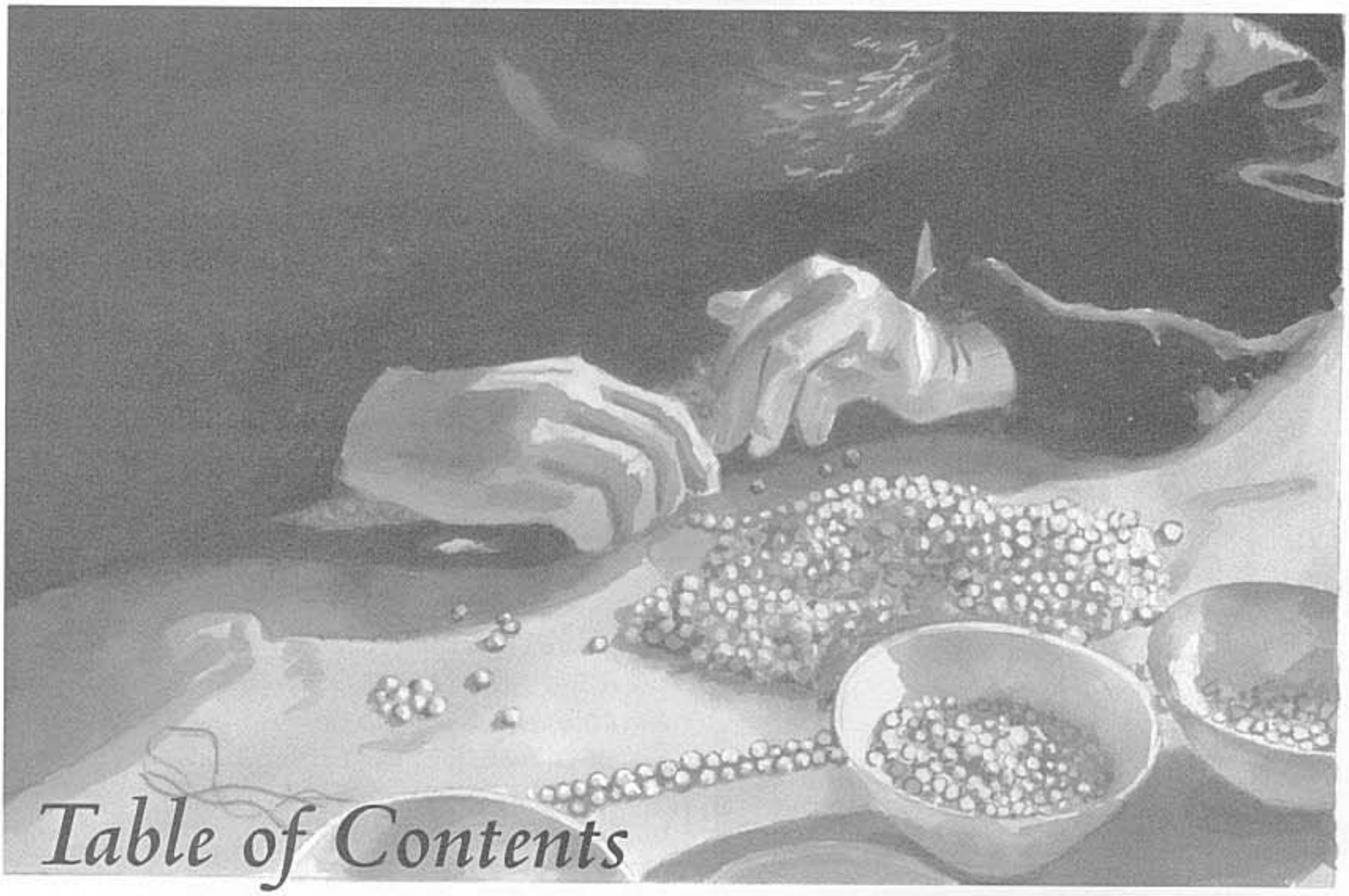

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Introduction

Welcome to China. The Empire of the Dragon sits at the center of the universe, the lone bastion of civilization amidst a vast sea of barbarism and savagery. The rise and fall of its fortunes has defined the course of Eastern History, and its rich, vibrant culture set the standard against which all the nations of the Orient have been judged.

At the beginning of the Third Century, the Empire has fractured into three separate warring states. This is a land of adventure. Magic is very real. Wizards pursue the secrets of arcane power and eternal life while priests call upon a multitude of spirits, gods, and dragons to bring rain and torment their enemies with curses and monsters. Bold warriors wander the land, looking for a chance to test their skills in battle, and crafty rogues rule the shadowy corridors of power where lives are just pieces on a game board.

Using this Product

JADE AND STEEL is a campaign setting for the d20 System set in the mythic past of ancient China. Information on Chinese culture and history, prestige classes tailored to Chinese legends, and feats and weapon stats for the period all allow players and GMs to recreate the exciting world of the Three Kingdoms Period. The adventure that appears in Part 3 is designed with 11th to 14th Level characters in mind and is typical of the fare common to the genre.

Chapter 1 presents an overview of China's mythic past and the events that shape the world as it was in 210 AD. Chapter 2 provides a brief discussion of heroic characters in Mythic China, including ways to customize d20 characters for a Chinese setting. Chapter 3 offers an adventure set against a backdrop of betrayal, bloodshed, grandeur, and greed.

JADE AND STEEL is set after the collapse of the Han Dynasty's 300-year rule. Under the Han, the Empire, seeking wealth, established the first Silk Road, and goods began to travel from oasis to oasis between China and the West. In 97 AD, the Emperor dispatched an army to conquer the far-off kingdom of Rome. When the army stood only a few days from Rome's eastern frontier in Asia Minor, the Emperor's general called off the invasion to protect the Empire from barbarians that were closer to home. 113 years later, the Empire is only a memory, and China is a land ruled by warlords, intrigues, and heroes.

Players and game masters alike will find that China's unique culture and history make it much more rewarding to create new Chinese characters with character backgrounds more appropriate to the magical world of the Three Kingdoms. The adventures are designed for characters who have been around long enough to become famous adventurers and well known heroes throughout the land and is set up with the viewpoint of the ancient Chinese in mind. Thus, native characters are far more fun than Western imports.

Characters can gain wealth and fame through dealing with ambitious warlords and cunning agents, or by securing victory on the battlefield. Wealthy nobles, or shih, trade in daughters and dowries, moving vast riches between powerful families. All the while, princes prepare for war, and gold is often as strong as steel. This is the exciting land of ancient China. Prepare your kung fu, focus your Ch'i, and get ready for adventure!

Part 1: Life and Times in the Three Kingdoms

Mythic History

Chinese History is divided into periods known as dynasties. JADE AND STEEL is set during what is known as the Three Kingdoms Period, a time during which China was divided into three warring states following the collapse of the Later Han Dynasty towards the end of the Second Century. Many myths and legends surround this time, and it is the mythic history of the Three Kingdoms that lays the foundation for this setting. What follows here is an overview of the events leading up to the establishment of the Three Kingdoms and a guide to Chinese Culture during this period.

An Empire in Strife

Around 150 AD, cults and secret societies spread throughout the failing Empire. These groups, often led by Taoist magicians, established communes to protect their members from the hard times that bore down upon the land. In the capital, palace eunuchs continued their age-old power plays and political maneuvers, effectively ruling the Empire by themselves. Rich merchants bought out bankrupt farmers and then treated their tenants as serfs, employing gangs of thugs to enforce their order. Common folk flocked to these wandering priests and wizards, hoping for aid from Heaven.

These cults often established communes where their members shared property. Priests cured the sick with miracles and heard confessions of criminals. Some, on the other hand, simply took what they wanted to build their homes. By the 180's, these uprisings had become such a problem that the eunuchs in the capital were forced to take action against them.

The eunuchs sought out General Tung Cho to suppress the revolt. Instead, however, he seized the capital and restored the Imperial Family to the throne. When rival generals rose to challenge his control of the Empire, Tung Cho kidnapped the Emperor and fled west. For several years, rival factions fought for control, winning and losing the Emperor until 190, when General Tsao Tsao finally managed to come out on top.

Tsao Tsao had the services of three great heroes: Liu Pei, Chang Fei, and Kuan Yu. They helped him suppress the cults during the 180's, but, rather than see China's rulers return to their self-destructive political intrigues, Liu Pei seized his own lands and founded the Kingdom of Shu. Chang Fei and Kuan Yu went with him to serve in his court. With the legendary warriors gone, other rival generals marshaled their forces and Sun Chuan set up the coastal Kingdom of Wu.

The Three Kingdoms Era marks another long period of division in China. In 208, Tsao Tsao tried to reconquer the Three Kingdoms. He lost, and retreated to his own capitol to found the Kingdom of Wei.

An Empire Divided

Now, in 210 AD, China is an empire in name only. The center of the universe is divided into three rival states. Wei, with its capital of Loyang, is ruled by Tsao Tsao and the puppet Emperor. Rival warlord Sun Chuan rules Wu out of the coastal city of Nanking, and the hero-princes Liu Pei, Chang Fei, and Kuan Yu watch over Shu from their capital at Chengtu.

Wei, with its active economy and fertile farmland, is the richest of the Three Kingdoms. Despite their political

Food

China's diet evolved dramatically as its borders absorbed new peoples. Originally, the Chinese ate millet cakes and also grew wheat and barley. Meat was expensive, so people used fruit, beans, tubers, onions, dumplings, and spices like ginger and basil to flavor their meals. Occasionally, they had beef, while the rich could afford luxuries like pork or chicken.

As the Chinese moved south, they discovered seafood and, most importantly, rice. By the time of the Three Kingdoms, rice dominated both their cuisine and their thought. "To eat rice" is a common Chinese description for having supper, the main meal of the day.

Tea, another Chinese favorite, did not exist during the Three Kingdoms Period. It would not appear in China for another 400 years. Before tea, however, they did have alcohol. They distilled rice into beer and wines, and, as the Middle Kingdom grew wealthier, the gentry learned to enjoy grape wine and coconut liquors. Southern travelers always drank heavily, believing that alcohol warded off malaria.

Clothing

The Chinese believed strongly in the phrase, "the clothes make the man." The civilized dress of the Middle Kingdom set it apart from the barbarians. The basic outfit for all Chinese, from the lowest urchin to the wealthiest Shih, consisted of a tunic belted with a sash, loose pants, and a padded jacket fastened by buttons made of knotted cord. Women added dresses and aprons. Round, woven straw hats offered protection from the sun and rain.

The length of the sleeves and the tunic depended on the nature of the wearer's work. Peasants, soldiers, and martial artists favored short or no sleeves and loose garments that allowed for maximum freedom of movement. Many commoners and soldiers also adopted from the horse barbarians a custom of wearing leather pants and sturdy boots, which made fighting, riding, and farming much easier. By contrast, an Imperial Minister's formal robes might trail several feet behind him.

Commoners made clothes out of hemp or nettle-fibers while the rich indulged mainly in silk. The poorest Chinese wore uncomfortable straw sandals or simply went barefoot.

Cloth or leather boots were the most common footwear, but the wealthy and their servants enjoyed brocade slippers. The well-to-do decorated their clothes with embroidery. Magistrates and other bureaucrats wore ritual capes as part of their offices, and special tunics were used for religious observances.

Color determined social status in the Three Kingdoms. Commoners usually wore black or earth tones. Purples, greens, and blues were reserved for officials, and only the Emperor and his personal staff wore yellow. White was for mourning, red for weddings. Women made heavy use of makeup, and the idle rich of both sexes sported long fingernails to show that they were above menial labor.

rivalry, Shu maintains ties with the Tibetan tribes to bolster its military strength. Wu, on the other hand, with its large barbarian population, has neither the wealth of Wei nor the strength of Shu. Its diplomats travel constantly between the other two kingdoms in an effort to prevent an invasion. Wu also trades with India by sea, a fact that will eventually cause it to become the center of Chinese Buddhism.

Magic

To the people of the Three Kingdoms, magic (Ch'ishu) is very real, and rules many aspects of life. Every person's soul is divided into a good Hun and an evil P'o, which necromancers can bind to corpses to create the undead. The services of diviners and geomancers are highly prized, and every Emperor seeks out alchemists to unlock the secrets of the fabled Elixir of Life. Chinese legends are full of wise and terrible dragons, beautiful ki-rin (unicorns), sorcerers, magic potions, spirits, monsters, demons, and great warriors whose control of their Ch'i (life force) allows them to perform superhuman feats in battle. The cosmic forces of Yin and Yang shape and balance all life, and the understanding of these interactions grants enlightenment and power. The Yin/Yang symbol represents the Chinese view that both must exist in equal proportion, and that each contains a small part of the other. The balance of Yin and Yang affects the living by controlling the flow of Ch'i in all things.

Most wizards learn spells from elder family members or as apprentices. Magicians constantly seek out students as trained assistants, companions for mystic quests, or "volunteers" to test prototype Elixirs of Life. This last duty can often be very dangerous since most Elixirs contain poisonous ingredients such as mercury.

To the people of the Three Kingdoms, magic is as real as the ground beneath their feet. It is simply a fact of life. Neither inherently "good" nor "evil," magic is simply another tool. Clearly a potent one, but a tool nonetheless. Magic convinces dragons to bring more rain to help failing crops. It enhances the Ch'i flow in an area to bring good fortune on those who live there. It allows mortals to divine the future. It banishes evil creatures and vengeful ghosts, sending them to their proper place in Heaven. Perhaps the ultimate goal of all Chinese magic, however, is eternal life.

Unlike their Western counterparts, Chinese alchemists strive to discover the Elixir of Life, a magical concoction that allows the person who drinks it to live forever. Rulers surround themselves with powerful magicians

and often drive them to pursue the heights of the magical arts in the hope of unlocking the secret of immortality. A spellcaster who manages to raise a person from the dead or restore youth and vitality to aging flesh is likely to be showered with riches and prestige. Even so, Mythic China remains a land full of powerful and mysterious beings that are privy to secrets that mortal wizards can rarely begin to comprehend. A wise magician treads carefully, for the spirits can be the greatest teachers, or the deadliest enemies.

The Five Elements

The Chinese believe in five elements: Earth (balance), Fire (greater Yang), Metal (lesser Yin), Water (greater Yin), and Wood (lesser Yang). Each element signifies a different degree of Yin (cool, luminous, feminine) or Yang (warm, energetic, masculine). The Chinese base their entire understanding of magic on the balance of Yin and Yang and the cyclical influence of the five elements on aspects of reality.

Each element's influence is inevitably overcome by that of another. In time, the new dominant element is replaced by a third, and so forth until the cycle is renewed. Additionally, each element's influence is controlled and restrained by two others. The cycle of ebb and flow repeats endlessly and ultimately results in a perfect balance of Yin and Yang in all things. The cycle turns in the following order:

1. *Wood supplants Earth.* Metal controls Wood and Fire limits its influence.

2. *Metal supplants Wood.* Fire controls Metal and Water limits its influence.

3. *Fire supplants Metal.* Water controls Fire and Earth limits its influence.

4. *Water supplants Fire.* Earth controls Water and Wood limits its influence.

5. *Earth supplants Water.* Wood controls Earth and Metal limits its influence.

Each dominant element is controlled by the one that later replaces it and limited by the element that controls its successor. Chinese magicians, especially diviners, take advantage of the cycle to aid their magic, but ultimately, all Chinese recognize that the cycle maintains the important balance between Yin and Yang and that all are subject to its influence. The Chinese believe that those who live according to the cycle will have good luck and that trying to resist its influence can bring dire consequences.

Feng Shui

Literally translated as "Wind and Water," Feng Shui is the Chinese art of understanding the balance of Yin and Yang in the landscape. Practitioners of Feng Shui, sometimes known as Hsien Shang or geometers, can divine the balance of Yin and Yang in an area and help to arrange things to optimize the flow of Ch'i. The Chinese believe that because the landscape is created by the action of wind and water (i.e., erosion), Feng Shui experts can understand the beneficial and negative forces that lie hidden within an area. By consulting with builders, Feng Shui experts help to ensure that both the construction process and the building itself will remain auspicious for years to come. Feng Shui is usually viewed as a way to live in harmony with the natural world rather than attempting to master it. In Mythic China, where magical forces and spirits can be understood and controlled, geometers can not only understand the flow of Ch'i in an area, they can also manipulate it to aid those who heed their advice. By understanding the nature of Yin and Yang in an area, the mythic geometer can positively align the fortune of an area with the Tao — the way of harmony with the universe.

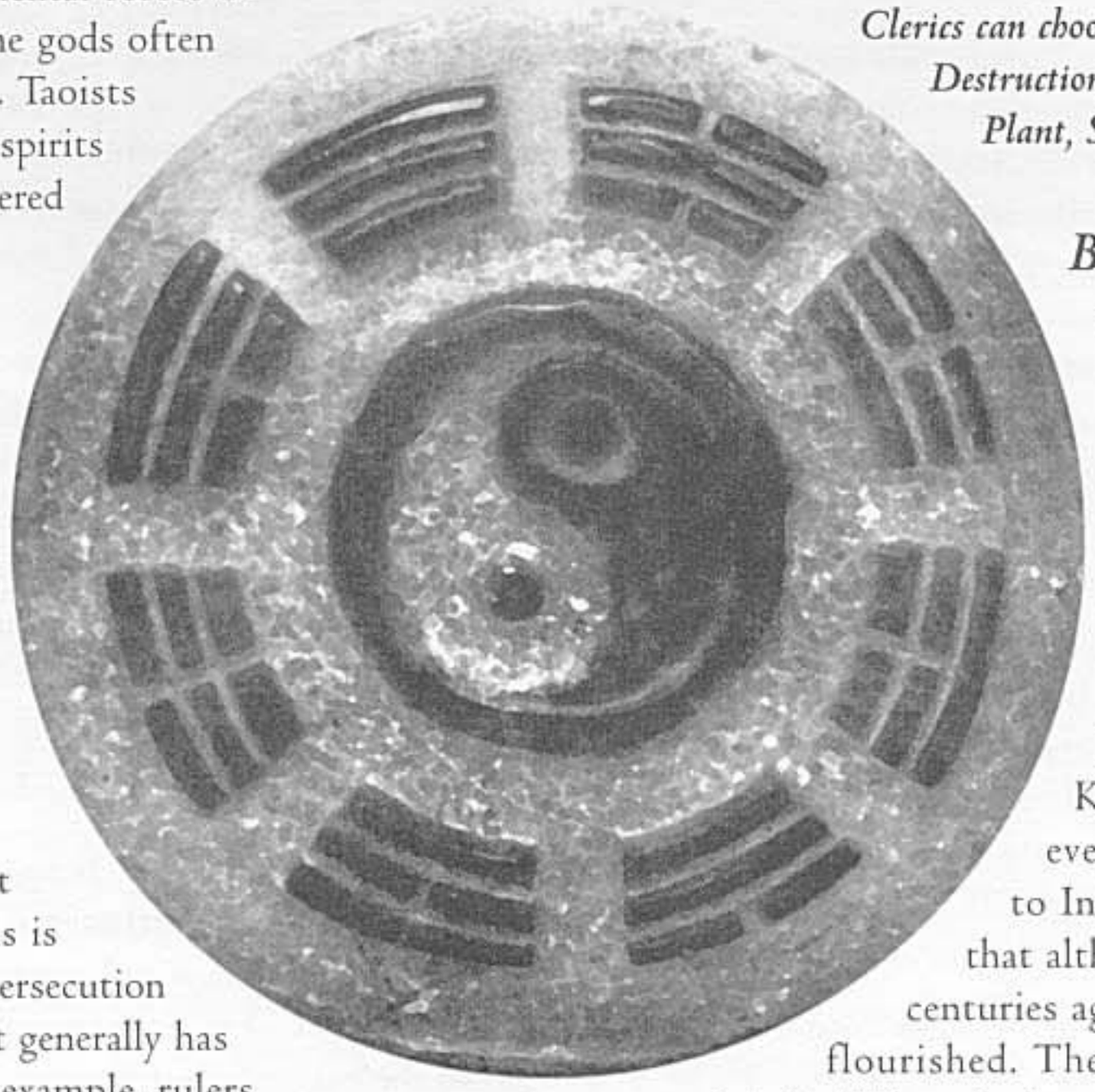
I Ching

The I Ching (Book of Changes) describes the Chinese art of divination. Soothsayers in the Three Kingdoms use it to advise their noble patrons by predicting the consequences of their intended actions. 64 hexagrams form the basis of the Changes. Each hexagram is a symbol composed of six lines divided into an upper group of three lines and a lower group of three lines (the upper and lower trigrams). Skilled diviners consult the I Ching by throwing six sticks. Each stick has a broken line on one side and a solid line on the other. The combined layout forms the hexagram.

Readings can become very complex. A detailed analysis of the I Ching would fill an entire book many times the size of JADE AND STEEL. For game purposes, successful readings may be used to gain insight about the possible outcomes of the event in question. I Ching readings can be very detailed, but the results are almost always cryptic. Attempts to decipher the language can themselves be the source of adventures. For more information on game effects see the Diviner character class in Part 1.

Philosophy and Religion

The people of the Three Kingdoms recognize over 30,000 gods. Most believe in all of them. Additionally, many Chinese have great respect for the philosophies of Buddhism, Confucianism, Legalism, and Taoism. These different schools of thought, while often opposing each other, generally coexist peacefully and can even be complementary. For example, Animist priests claim that Lao Tzu, the founder of Taoism, was the mortal manifestation of the elemental forces of Earth. In many legends, the gods often turn to Buddha for advice. Taoists believe that gods were the spirits of humans who had discovered unity with the Tao and become immortal. Confucius and other philosophers rarely spoke of the supernatural, preferring to restrict their teachings to mortal affairs. The Chinese can easily take their pick of belief systems, all free of hypocrisy. Ideological differences are things for scholars to debate and not reasons to fight wars. This is not to say that religious persecution does not occur, only that it generally has very pragmatic goals. For example, rulers might close down Buddhist monasteries in times of famine in order to conscript the monks into the work force or disband religious societies in order to ferret out cells of revolutionaries hiding among them.



Animism

China's ancient form of paganism involves pleasing and otherwise manipulating the spirits of nature in order to work divine magic. Mortal wu (shamans) carry wishes to the gods and return bearing miracles and the commands of Heaven. By the time of the Three Kingdoms, Animism has lost much of its influence. Taoist and Buddhist priests have largely supplanted the wu, but the common folk do not forget the spirits as easily as kings might. The wu still preserve their magical lore, and many rural Chinese continue to revere them.

The chief god of Chinese paganism is Ti, the Emperor of Heaven. He creates and destroys life, causes rain and drought, and brings victory and defeat. Other powers represent the Five Elements and the many forces of nature. All these gods serve Ti in some respect, and he often relies upon them to carry out his wishes or those of mortals who pray to him.

Animists also worship the spirits of their ancestors. They believe that the spirits of the dead may literally transcend to divinity. ***Many Animists follow the Druid and Ranger classes. Because there are so many Animist gods, immortal ancestors, and divine spirits, pagan Clerics can choose from the Air, Animal, Destruction, Earth, Evil, Fire, Good, Plant, Sun, and Water Domains.***

Buddhism

Legends say that a Han Emperor learned about Buddha in a dream. He dispatched explorers to the corners of the world to find the word of Siddartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism. Leaving the Middle Kingdom, the explorers eventually made their way to India, where they learned that although Gautama had died centuries ago, his teachings still flourished. They returned to China with Buddhist missionaries and began to establish its teachings.

The Kingdom of Wu trades the most heavily with India, and as such it remains the strongest bastion of Buddhism in the Three Kingdoms. In later centuries, a Buddhist monk named Bodhidharma would bring the teachings of Zen Buddhism to a mountain monastery called Shaolin. Chinese Buddhism follows the same principles as Indian Buddhism. By freeing the soul from the sins of ignorance, greed, and passion, a mortal may escape the cycle of reincarnation that ties the soul to the material world. Only by escaping the delusion of strong emotions (anger, happiness, hate, and sorrow) can a mortal escape the cycle of life, death, and rebirth and attain the blessed state of Nirvana. ***In keeping with their quest for enlightenment and escape from the cycle of reincarnation, Buddhist Clerics may choose from the Death, Knowledge, Law, Strength, and Trickery Domains.***

Confucianism

Many learned Chinese follow the teachings of Kung Fu Tzu (Confucius). This legendary philosopher was most likely born around 550 BC and went to school to study for the civil service. Followers of his teachings believe that his honesty and unwillingness to flatter corrupt officials prevented him from excelling in the Imperial Bureaucracy. Confucius developed his teachings in order to help preserve the state and protect its institutions from decadence and decay.

Confucian Thought teaches the virtues of respect for elders and duty to the state, which makes it very popular with the ruling classes. Confucius believed that humanity was most virtuous when it showed the proper respect toward authority. Children should revere their elders just as adults should show deference to the state. Likewise, those in positions of authority should promote virtue by earning the esteem of those beneath them through example, not force.

Legalism

Founded by Shang Yang, a philosopher from the 4th Century BC, Legalism teaches that mercy encourages vice and a gentle ruler breeds sloth, crime, and cowardice. To combat these evils, rulers must be iron-fisted, laws must be unyielding, and punishments for all transgressions must be swift and merciless. Legalists encourage rulers to unify language and measurement so that there can be consistent enforcement of standards, and some even advocate deliberate creation of food shortages to keep the common folk more concerned about hunger than politics.

The keystone of Legalist thought, however, involves reading and writing. All rulers should write down their decrees, and everyone should be able to read them. Then subjects would no longer have to think for themselves. They would know and understand that there are but two options: total obedience or agonizing death.

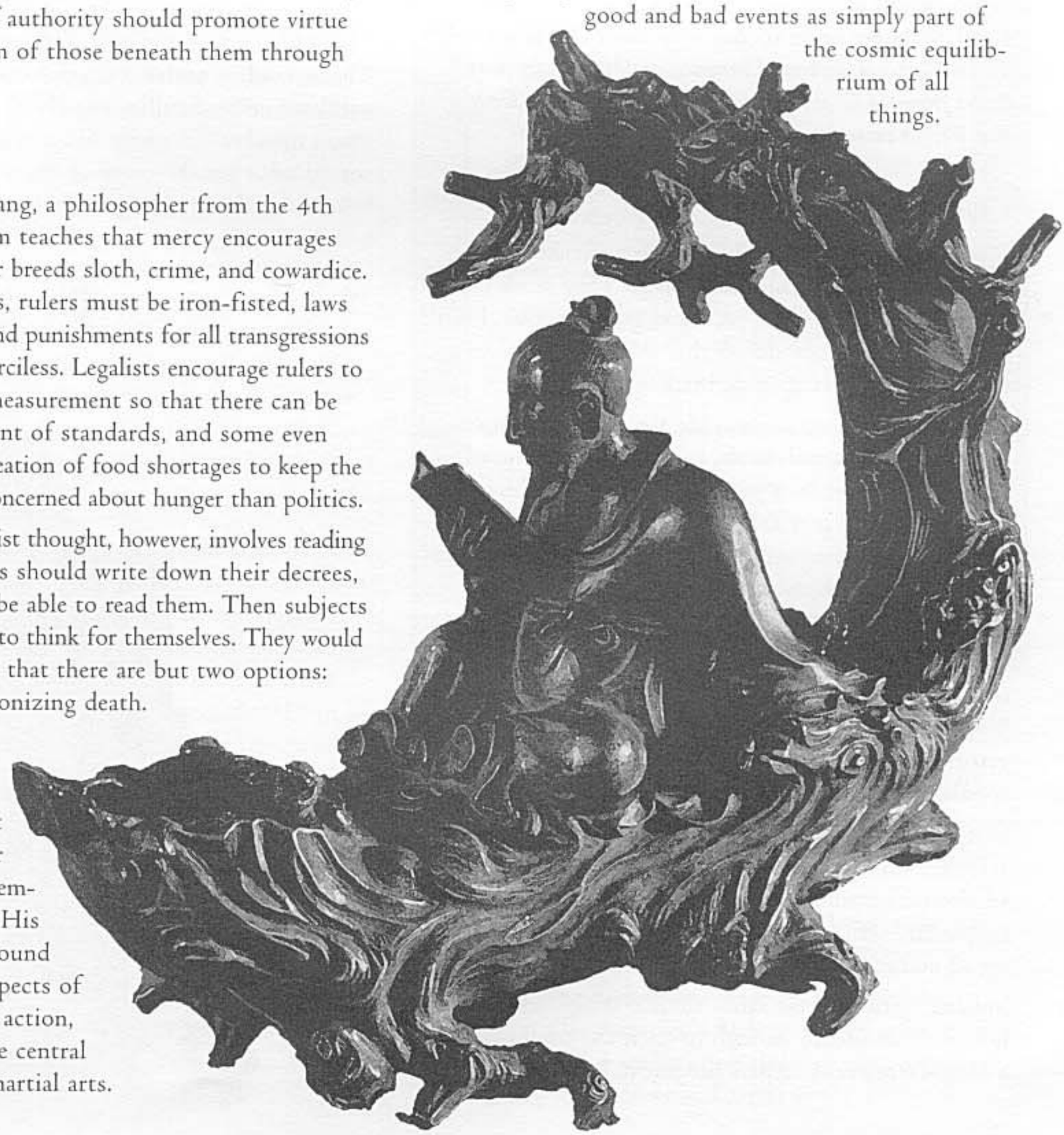
Taoism

Some tales claim that Lao Tzu, the founder of Taoism, was a contemporary of Confucius. His teachings have a profound influence on many aspects of Chinese thought and action, including many of the central philosophies of the martial arts.

Taoism is difficult to understand because its practitioners often refuse to explain it. Taoists believe that people must leave society behind and return to the natural world, though this is only a small fragment of their views. They believe that all of existence is part of the Tao, or the Way. The Tao is everywhere, and its subtle influence guides all things, no matter how great or small.

Taoists introduced the concept of Yin and Yang to Chinese Thought. Yin represents darkness and negative energy, while Yang represents light and positive energy. They are opposites but inextricably linked. The classic Yin/Yang symbol shows this viewpoint elegantly. Yin and Yang exist in equal proportion, and each contains a bit of the other.

Yin and Yang energies are part of every living being, and everything must strive towards balance. Taoists view good and bad events as simply part of the cosmic equilibrium of all things.



As Yin and Yang ebb and flow, things change to reflect these shifts. All people should recognize this balance and try to live in harmony with the Tao. Strong emotions like lust, hatred, and envy are to be avoided as they interfere with natural harmony. Taoists also criticize the state of worldly affairs. Why place so much value, they ask, on something that means so little?

Taoism has also had a profound effect on the development of Chinese martial arts. Wu-Wei, or action without thought, is a key concept that teaches that harmony with the Tao leads to spontaneous motion free of conscious thought. A Taoist martial artist who embraces the principles of Wu-Wei makes combative skills an integral part of his or her very being. The martial artist reacts to attacks instinctively, unfettered by the need to decide how to respond to an attack or opening. A true master of Wu-Wei is almost impossible to surprise because the mind no longer needs to direct the body to defend itself.
Taoist Clerics, as seekers of harmony amidst disorder, may choose from the Chaos, Healing, Magic, Protection, Travel, and War Domains.

Crime and Punishment

Magistrates appointed through a complex civil service examination system rule each village. They move from town to town every three years and generally must handle all the administrative duties that their superiors deem too troublesome to manage themselves.

Magistrates are also responsible for solving crimes and personally conduct all trials, both criminal and civil. They have tremendous power over the proceedings and frequently order parties and witnesses caned in order to add to the terrifying atmosphere of the court. This helps to minimize the number of cases that they have to try.

Before they can pass judgment, though, magistrates must secure a confession. Generally, they resort to torture to obtain it. Chinese torture is brutally effective, but a Magistrate must exercise caution. Killing a party without getting a confession will earn the Magistrate an appointment of his own with a torturer.

Even during the Three Kingdoms Period, torture is a science. Some Legalist rulers become very creative in administering punishments, but generally, torture is both simple and efficient. Caning, blinding, and mutilation are all common punishments.

Judicial torture is also fairly simple. Whips, clamps, and hot irons are usually enough to elicit the confession that a Magistrate needs to pass judgment. Most torturers use simple tools like sharp knives and splinters, but their careful study of anatomy makes them experts at causing pain. The Chinese also understand the importance of psychological torment. The notorious Chinese Water Torture, where the torturer drips water on the prisoner's head one drop at a time, can drive the victim insane over the course of several days. And Chinese torturers are very, very patient.

The most elaborate forms of affliction are generally reserved for executions, especially for political offenders. Victims might be sawn in half, boiled in oil, buried alive, quartered by chariots, or simply strangled, depending on the whim of the Magistrate. One of the most imaginative punishments is the Death of One Thousand and One Cuts. Each day, the executioner randomly amputates a body part at the joint and immediately cauterizes the wound to prevent death by blood loss. Truly skilled executioners can make this agony last for months.

Chinese judges prefer collective sentencing. They freely condemn entire families or villages for the crimes of a single member. An entire village might be sentenced to forced labor for the crime of one person. The Chinese believe that this encourages people not to harbor fugitives.

Part 2: Characters

This part of the book provides information for playing characters in the Three Kingdoms setting. New skills, feats, weapons, and prestige classes are provided for use in your games. All of the material in Part 2 is designated Open Content for license purposes, not just the material in the sidebars.

Race

Because this product's setting is historical China, the only race available to characters is human. While mythic and legendary aspects of the setting do exist within the game, traditional fantasy races are foreign to the mythos.

Additionally, Mythic China is a much more rewarding setting if experienced through characters native to its world rather than ones imported from a Western fantasy environment. In other words, this product is designed for Chinese characters with the Chinese viewpoint in mind. You can bring in Western characters, but you'll enjoy the game more if your heroes are natives, so to speak.

New Prestige Classes

All of the normal character classes are available in the Three Kingdoms. Additionally, JADE AND STEEL includes some feats and prestige classes to help players and game masters reflect many of the unique nuances of mythic Chinese culture by providing more options for customized characters.

Alchemist

Known as "the Great Art," Alchemy is the pursuit of a single goal: eternal life. Rulers throughout the ages have sought out powerful spellcasters to gain the elusive blessing of immortality. Though many false paths to everlasting life like necromancy exist, none of them provides the eternal, perfect life after which the Alchemist lusts. In pursuit of their goals, these characters have raised their knowledge of the Art beyond the understanding of even great scholars. For the true Alchemist, the dabbling of most wizards and priests seems childish while their own greatest works baffle even the wisest of non-initiates.

Requirements - Alchemy (10 Ranks), Feats (Brew Potion, Skill Focus: Alchemy), Arcane Spellcasting (Seven Transmutation spells, at least one of which must be 3rd Level or higher)

Hit Die: d6

Skill Points: 2 + Int Bonus per level

Class Skills: Alchemy, Appraise, Concentration, Craft, Heal, Knowledge (all), Profession, Spellcraft.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Alchemists gain no additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

Class Features - Alchemists have the following special abilities, acquired at a rate indicated on "Table 2-1."

Spellcasting: The Alchemist continues to study the arcane arts. The character's Alchemist level adds to that of his or her prior spellcasting class for the purpose of determining spell access and caster level.

Women in the Three Kingdoms

Like most cultures of the time, the Three Kingdoms are a man's world. Daughters are burdens to be married off as soon as possible. Many families keep slave girls, and slavers have no qualms about kidnapping them.

However, in Mythic China, heroines can and do rise above these limitations. The Chinese accept female wu, nuns, spies, entertainers, and artists. Additionally, there are two other ways for a woman to stand proudly in a male-dominated world: magic and the martial arts.

Magical talent, particularly of the animist variety, knows no difference between men and women. Female druids and sorcerers wield spells that are just as powerful as those of their male counterparts. A powerful female spellcaster can easily earn at least grudging respect from male onlookers with even a simple display of her magical power.

Chinese legends are full of heroines who scoff at the idea of female inferiority. Through mastery of the martial arts, female characters can easily force the issue upon unsuspecting male adversaries. Players should feel free to create daring female adventurers. After all, exceptional folk are what legends are all about.

Brewing Bonus: The Alchemist may add half the number of his or her class level (round down) to Alchemy skill checks.

Brew Elixir: The Alchemist may brew spells of up to 6th level into potions.

Table 2-1: Alchemist Class Features

Level	*Attack*	*Fort.*	*Ref.*	*Will*	*Class Features*
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Spellcasting, Brewing Bonus (Ex)
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	Brew Elixir (Ex)
3	+1	+3	+1	+3	Brew Tablet (Ex)
4	+2	+4	+1	+4	Analyze Chemical (Ex)
5	+2	+4	+1	+4	Chemical Resistance (Ex), Brew Paint (Ex)
6	+3	+5	+2	+5	Substitute (Ex)
7	+3	+5	+2	+5	Brew Oil (Ex)
8	+4	+6	+2	+6	Brew Superior Elixir (Ex)
9	+4	+6	+3	+6	Brew Gas (Ex)
10	+5	+7	+3	+7	Elixir of Life (Ex)

Analyze Chemical: The character may analyze an organic substance to discover its basic properties and any general uses it may have. The DC for this roll is 35, and the process requires one full day of work and 50 gold per attempt.

Chemical Resistance: The Alchemist may add his or her Brewing Bonus to all Saving Throws versus harmful substances (acid, gas, poison, etc.).

Substitute Minerals: The Alchemist may replace some or all of the experience point cost of creating a magic item with rare ingredients costing 5gold/experience point.

Brew Greater Elixir: The Alchemist may brew spells of any level into potions.

Brew Tablet/Paint/Oil/Gas: The character may now brew potions into other forms. Tablets are small pills that take effect when swallowed. Paints take 1 minute/100 gold of the base price of creating them to apply and do not take effect until the application process is complete. However, their effects last a number of hours equal to the Alchemist's character level. Paint costs double the usual price to brew.

Oils take effect immediately upon contact with bare skin. They last the standard duration but are triple the cost to make.

Gasses affect everyone in a 10' radius when they are released and last the standard duration of the spell. The cost is quadrupled.

Elixir of Life: The Alchemist's work has finally paid off. The character has achieved the pinnacle of his or her art and discovered a workable formula for an Elixir of Life, the key to immortality. The required ingredients and requisite spells are different for each Alchemist but always cost at least 100,000 gold and 10,000 experience to make. The character may use Substitute Mineral for the elixir.

Once the ingredients have been gathered, the brewing process takes one month, after which the Alchemist makes an Alchemy roll against a DC of 45. The character may choose to Take 20. If successful, the character has created an Elixir of Life. The Elixir, once consumed, grants the drinker Rapid Healing, which allows him or her to heal at twice the normal rate and is an Extraordinary Ability. Additionally, the drinker can be permanently killed only by reducing him or her to -30 HP and then casting a Wish or Miracle spell to make it permanent. Any spells or other effects that would instantly slay the recipient instead reduce him or her to -10 HP. These benefits last for one full season. Lastly, the Elixir of Life reduces the age of the drinker by 1d10 years.

If the Alchemy roll fails, however, the elixir is somehow flawed. The Alchemist is not aware of any defect, though, making drinking a purported Elixir of Life a risky business. GMs may wish to make the roll for the Alchemist to keep the results secret. Anyone who drinks a flawed Elixir must roll 1d6 and consult *"Table 2-2: Results of Drinking a Flawed Elixir of Life"* to determine what happens.

Dim Mak Practitioner

The mere mention of the dreaded Dim Mak, or Touch of Death, can make brave souls quake with fear. Practitioners of these secret arts learn to extend the control of their own Ch'i (life force) to enable them to manipulate the flow of others' by striking at a series of vital pressure points. By doing so, the Dim Mak Practitioner can induce weakness, blindness, paralysis, and even death. Monks who choose this path may freely multiclass between the two classes.

Requirements: Base Attack Bonus of +4 or better, Feats (Improved Unarmed Strike, Improved Trip, Improved Initiative)

Hit Die: d8

Skills Points: 4 + Int Bonus per level

Class Skills: Balance, Climb, Concentration, Craft, Diplomacy, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Knowledge: Arcana, Listen, Move Silently, Perform, Profession, Swim, and Tumble.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Dim Mak Practitioners completely eschew weapons and armor to further develop their mastery of Ch'i. They gain no additional armor or weapon proficiencies.

Class Features: The Dim Mak Practitioner acquires the following Class Features at the rate indicated on Table 2-3.

Student of Perfection: Practitioners are monks, though they focuses their Ch'i in different ways. As such, Monk characters that become Practitioners gain the Base and Unarmed Attack Bonuses, AC bonus, Stunning Attacks, Saving Throws, and unarmored speed as if they were Monks of a level equal to their Monk and Practitioner levels combined. Thus, a 6th Level Monk/3rd Level Practitioner is treated as a 9th Level Monk for purposes of the bonuses listed above. Non-Monk characters that become Practitioners have the Unarmed Attack Bonus, AC bonus, and unarmored speed abilities as monks of their Practitioner level. So a 4th Level Cleric/1st Level Practitioner is treated as a 1st Level Monk for those bonuses.

Chakra Strike: Practitioners learn to strike at vital points and Ch'i meridians. Their unarmed attacks count as magic weapons with enhancement bonuses equal to their Chakra Strike level for the purposes of attacking creatures with Damage Reduction, but they gain no actual attack and damage bonuses on the die roll. Additionally, Practitioners add their levels in Chakra Strike to the critical range of their unarmed attacks. This bonus is applied last, after any multipliers, just as in the Improved Critical Feat.

Table 2-2: Results of Drinking a Flawed Elixir of Life

Die Roll	*Result*
1	Elixir is a deadly poison. Drinker must succeed at a Fortitude Save vs. DC 25 or die. Even if successful, the Elixir ages the drinker by 1d6 + 4 years.
2	Elixir appears to work normally. For one season, the elixir grants the drinker all the usual powers. At the end of the season, however, the imbiber ages 2d6+8 years.
3	Elixir is partially effective. The drinker becomes 1d20 years younger but must succeed at a Fortitude Save vs. DC 25 or suffer 1d6 permanent Constitution damage.
4	Elixir sickens the drinker for 10d6 days, during which time he or she can do nothing but rest and recover from fever, nausea, and chills.
5	Elixir is partially effective. Drinker becomes 1d6 years younger but also loses 1d4 class levels.
6	Elixir is overly effective. The drinker's age is reduced to 1d6+4 years, making him or her a child between five and 10 years old. The character suffers a -4 reduction in Strength and Constitution and a -2 reduction in Dexterity. Additionally, the unfortunate must succeed in a Will Save vs. DC 25 or his or her mental faculties are reduced to those of a child of the appropriate age. Regardless, the victim must now grow up all over again. At age 12, the drinker gains +3 Strength and Constitution, and +1 to Dexterity. At age 16, all Ability Scores are restored to normal.

Table 2-3: Dim Mak Practitioner Class Features

Level	*Attack*	*Fort.*	*Ref.*	*Will*	*Unarmed Damage*	*Class Features*
1	+0	+2	+2	+2	d8	Student of Perfection, Chakra Strike 1 (Su)
2	+1	+3	+3	+3	d10	Extra Stunning Attacks (Su)
3	+2	+3	+3	+3	d10	Chakra Strike 2 (Su), Atemi Attack (Su)
4	+3	+4	+4	+4	d10	Withering Strike (Su)
5	+3	+4	+4	+4	d10	Chakra Strike 3 (Su)
6	+4	+5	+5	+5	d12	Blinding Strike (Su)
7	+5	+6	+6	+6	d12	Crippling Strike (Su)
8	+6	+6	+6	+6	d12	Paralyzing Strike (Su)
9	+6	+6	+6	+6	d12	Quivering Palm (Su)
10	+7	+7	+7	+7	d12	Distant Blow (Sp)

Extra Stunning Attack: Practitioners gain extra Stunning Attacks per day equal to half their Practitioner level, rounding down.

Atemi Attack: By attacking the proper pressure points, the character can induce weakness in his or her opponents. Any target that fails a saving throw against a Practitioner's Stunning Attack also takes one point of Strength damage and one point of Dexterity damage.

Withering Strike: The Practitioner's successful Stunning Attacks leave victims in debilitating pain. Three times per day, Practitioners can attempt to induce severe pain with a touch. Foes who fail the Stunning Attack Saving Throw are fatigued for 1d6 rounds after being stunned and are also affected by the Atemi Attack.

Blinding Strike: By attacking the proper pressure points, Practitioners can strike foes blind. Three times per day, the character can attempt to blind an opponent with his or her Stunning Attack. Targets who fail the Stunning Attack Saving Throw are Blinded for 1d6 rounds instead of stunned in addition to being affected by the Atemi Attack. Alternately, Practitioners may elect to do no damage with the Blinding Attack and instead cure induced blindness by restoring the proper flow of Ch'i within the target. Using the Blinding Strike to cure blindness does not invoke the Atemi Attack.

Crippling Strike: Practitioners can also manipulate pressure points to temporarily cripple their enemies. Like the Withering Strike and Blinding Strike, a character who knows Dim Mak can choose to substitute the Crippling Strike for a Stunning Attack three times a day. Foes who fail the Saving Throw are not stunned but can only take partial actions for 1d6 rounds and suffer the effects of the Atemi Attack. Alternately, Practitioners may elect to do no damage with the Crippling Attack and instead cancel the effects of a Slow spell (or similar power) by restoring the proper flow of Ch'i within the target. Using the Crippling Attack to cancel a Slow spell does not invoke the Atemi Attack.

Paralyzing Strike: More dreadful than the Crippling Strike is the Paralyzing Strike. Usable three times a day, this ability acts exactly as Crippling Strike, except that it leaves foes Paralyzed instead of crippled for 1d6 rounds. Like Crippling Strike, this ability may be reversed to cure Paralysis.

Quivering Palm: As the Monk ability.

Distant Blow: The ultimate goal of the Dim Mak Practitioner is to attack another person's vital points

through Ch'i alone. This ability makes that possible. Once per day, the Practitioner may "spend" a Stunning Attack to make a ranged touch attack as a standard action. In addition to dealing the character's normal unarmed damage, the Practitioner may choose either to employ one of his or her special attacks (Stunning, Blinding, Crippling, or Paralyzing) or to deal additional damage equal to his or her normal unarmed attack damage.

Diviner

The I Ching is a powerful fortune-telling tool for those who take the time to master its complexities. These men and women seek to understand the workings of the universe through the trigrams, and those who master the art can uncover secrets otherwise known only to the gods. The trick is knowing what questions to ask and understanding the answers. For the Diviner, there can be no higher calling in life.

Diviners must be able to consult the trigrams of the I Ching to practice their art. This requires access to certain books and tools. An I Ching reading can be a very complicated task. Each reading takes ten minutes and requires a Scry check (DC 30) to successfully complete. Diviners can take more time than necessary to double and triple check their charts and books, sacrificing time for accuracy. They can effectively choose to Take 20 on the Scry check, following the normal rules. For more information on the I Ching, see Part 1.

Requirements: Knowledge: Arcana (8 ranks), Scry (8 ranks), Feat (Spell Focus: Divination), Arcane Spellcasting (seven Divination spells, one of which must be at least 3rd level).

Hit Die: d4

Skills Points: 2 + Int bonus per level

Class Skills: Concentration, Decipher Script, Gather Information, Knowledge (all), Scry, Spellcraft

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Diviners gain no additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

Class Features: The following are a Diviner's Class Features:

Spellcasting: The Diviner continues to study the arcane arts. The character's Diviner level adds to that of his or her prior spellcasting class for the purpose of determining spell access and caster level.

Augury: The Diviner may cast the Divine Spell, Augury, with a successful I Ching reading.

Insight: The character may attempt an I Ching reading to determine clear answers to direct questions. For each level of Insight, the Diviner may ask one yes/no question and get an accurate response. If the Diviner can ask multiple questions, they must all be about the same topic.

Divination: The character can cast the Divine Spell, Divination, with a successful I Ching reading.

Inspiration: The character's ability to learn important information now expands to practically any subject. When wishing to learn more about a place, person, thing, etc., the Diviner rolls an Inspiration check, adding a bonus equal to his or her Intelligence modifier plus Diviner level. The DC is determined by how obscure the information is. Common knowledge is DC 10. Information that is uncommon but available merits a 20. Obscure information is DC 25, and truly obscure facts are DC 30. Note that this ability does not allow the character to see into the future or scry on others. It simply grants the user knowledge of the person, place, or thing in question. Inspiration 2 doubles the character's Int

Table 2-4: Diviner Class Features

Level	*Attack*	*Fort.*	*Ref.*	*Will*	*Class Features*
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Spellcasting, Augury (Sp)
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Insight 1 (Sp)
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	Divination (Sp)
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Insight 2 (Sp)
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	Inspiration 1 (Sp)
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	Insight 3 (Sp)
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	Find the Path (Sp)
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	Insight 4 (Sp)
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	Inspiration 2 (Sp)
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	Insight 5 (Sp)

modifier when making an Inspiration check.

Find the Path: A successful I Ching reading allows the character to cast the Divine Spell, Find the Path.

Geometer

The revered Taoists known as the Hsien Shang (Geometers) seek to understand the nature of the Tao (the Way). They are experts at perceiving the Feng Shui of an area and subtly altering it so that those present become attuned to the Tao. By bringing people into harmony with the Tao, the Hsien Shang can bring the blessings of good fortune to allies and clients.

Once per day, the Geometer can attempt to harmonize the Feng Shui of an area. This simple ritual takes one hour, and affects an area of 100 square feet. The character can harmonize one area per class level, though each one takes an hour. Harmonizing an entire building can take weeks, depending on its size. By using ritual tools such as mirrors and chimes, and by careful arrangement of the contents of the area (furniture, fixtures, etc.), the Geometer brings it into harmony with the Tao. Those who spend at least eight hours resting in such an area gain benefits based on their harmony with the Tao that manifest as good luck throughout the next day.

Geometers can also affect areas on a more permanent basis. Skilled Hsien Shang can enchant an area with certain Divine Spells the same way that other spellcasters enchant items. Geometers can only use this ability if they are consulted during the planning and construction of a new building, which makes their services extremely valuable to the wealthy.

Lastly, living harmoniously with the Tao has its own rewards. Geometers seem to carry a bit of their good fortune around with them, wherever they go. Such are the benefits of seeking the Way.

Requirements: Knowledge: Arcana (8 ranks), Knowledge: Religion (8 ranks), Spellcraft (8 ranks), Feats (Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell), 3rd Level Divine spells.

Hit Die: d8

Skill Points: 4 + Int Bonus per level

Class Skills: Appraise, Concentration, Craft, Diplomacy, Heal, Knowledge: Arcana, Knowledge: Nature, Knowledge: Religion, Profession, Search, Sense Motive, and Spellcraft.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Geometers gain no additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

Class Features: Geometers benefit from the following Class Features. They gain them at a rate detailed on Table 2-5.

Spellcasting: The Geometer continues to study the arcane arts. The character's Geometer level adds to that of his or her prior spellcasting class for the purpose of determining spell access and caster level.

Harmony Within: The Hsien Shang's understanding of the Tao grants him or a +1 Luck bonus to all Saving Throws.

Enchant Area: The Geometer can enchant rooms with certain Divine Spells. Doing so uses the standard item creation rules. Each level of Enchant Area gives the Geometer the ability to imbue an area with new spells. Any person who has spent at least eight hours in an enchanted area may invoke an enchantment as a standard action. For a list of which spells are available see Table 2-6.

Table 2-5: Geometer Class Features

Level	*Attack*	*Fort.*	*Ref.*	*Will*	*Class Features*
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Spellcasting, Enchant Area 1 (Sp), Harmony Within (Su)
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Harmony's Blessing (Su)
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	Enchant Area 2 (Sp)
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	Harmony Without (Sp)
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	Enchant Area 3 (Sp)
6	+4	+2	+2	+5	Harmony's Touch (Sp)
7	+5	+2	+2	+5	Enchant Area 4 (Sp)
8	+6	+2	+2	+6	Harmony's Shield (Sp)
9	+6	+3	+3	+6	Enchant Area 5 (Sp)
10	+7	+3	+3	+7	Perfect Harmony (Sp)

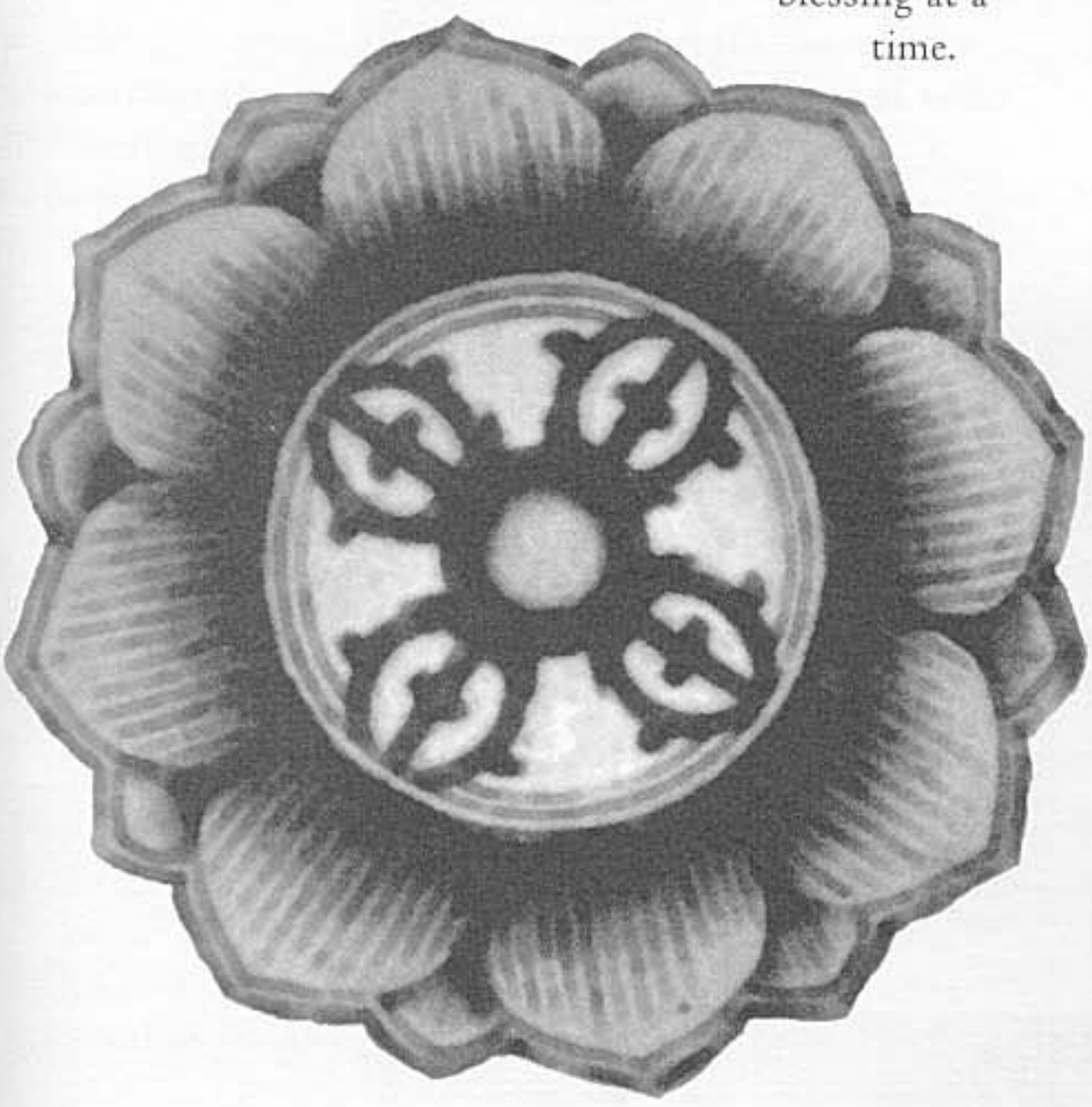
Harmony's Blessing: The character's understanding of the Tao now grants him or her great fortune. He or she gains access to spells from the Luck Domain. If the character already had access to the Luck Domain, he or she can use the domain ability one additional time per day.

Harmony Without: The Geometer can extend the blessings of harmonious existence to others. Once per day, a character who has spent eight hours in an area set up by the Geometer may invoke a +2 Luck bonus to all Saving Throws. This blessing lasts one hour per Geometer level and can affect up to two people per day. No character may receive more than one blessing.

Harmony's Touch: Others benefit from the Geometer's abilities. Once per day, a character that has spent eight hours of rest in an area prepared by the Hsien Shang may re-roll any single die roll, keeping the better result. This blessing lasts for one day and can affect up to two people. No character may receive more than one blessing at a time.

Table 2-6: Enchant Area Spells

Enchant Area Level	*Spells*
1	Bless, Divine Favor, Shield of Faith
2	Aid, Calm Emotions, Consecrate
3	Magic Circle Against Chaos/Evil/Good/Law, Prayer, Remove Curse
4	Death Ward, Dismissal, Restoration
5	Hallow, Spell Resistance, True Seeing



Harmony's Shield: The Geometer can extend the blessings of harmonious existence to others. Once per day, a character who has spent eight hours in an area prepared by the Geometer may gain a +2 Luck bonus to attack rolls and AC. This blessing lasts one hour per level of the Hsien Shang and can affect up to two people per day. No character may receive more than one blessing.

Perfect Harmony: The Geometer's harmony with the Tao is such that those nearby are infused with a sense of peace. Once per day, the character may create an aura of calm around himself or herself. Any creature attempting to attack him or her with a weapon, spell, or Spell-like Ability must first make a successful Will Save vs. a DC of 10 + the Geometer's class level + Wisdom bonus. If it is failed, the would-be assailant cannot disturb the tranquility surrounding the character. The Geometer can maintain this aura for as long as he or she chooses to concentrate on it, but any successful attack dispels it immediately.

Iron Hand Disciple

Chinese stories are filled with great martial artists who can shatter boulders with their bare hands and whose bodies are so full of Ch'i that even the sharpest blades glance harmlessly off their skin. The Iron Hand Disciples are such warriors, who have focused their Ch'i solely into the development of their physical abilities. Their body-hardening exercises enable them to inflict tremendous damage with their blows and to shrug off all but the most powerful attacks. Many Disciples proudly display

as badges of honor and signs of their dedication to their art the scars that cover their bodies as a result of training. Monks who become Iron Hand Disciples may freely multiclass between both classes.

Requirements: Base Attack Bonus +4 or better, Feats (Improved Unarmed Strike, Great Fortitude, Power Attack)

Hit Die: d8

Skill Points: 4 + Int Bonus per level

Class Skills: Balance, Climb, Concentration, Craft, Diplomacy, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Knowledge: Arcana, Listen, Move Silently, Perform, Profession, Swim, and Tumble

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Iron Hand Disciples completely eschew weapons and armor in favor of physical training. They gain no additional armor or weapon proficiencies.

Student of Perfection: Disciples are monks, though they focus their Ch'i differently. For that reason, Monks who become Disciples have Attack Bonuses and Unarmed Attack Bonuses, AC bonuses, Stunning Attacks, Saving Throws, and unarmored speed equal to their Monk level plus their Disciple level. Thus, a 5th Level Monk/4th Level Iron Hand Disciple has the bonuses of a 9th Level Monk. Characters of other classes that become Disciples gain the Unarmed Attack Bonus, AC bonus, and unarmored speed abilities of a Monk equal to their Iron Hand Disciple level.

Iron Hand Attacks: Twice per day per class level, the Disciple may add 1d4 damage to any Unarmed Attack. This ability can also be used with Flurry of Blows.

Crushing Blow: The Disciple's unarmed attacks strike with deadlier and deadlier force. The character gains a natural enhancement bonus to all Unarmed Attacks equal to his or her level in this ability.

Breaking Blow: The Disciple's hands and feet are so tough that they can even shatter steel. The character can make an Unarmed Strike to damage an opponent's weapon without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Heart of Iron: Through the supreme focus of Ch'i, masters of the Heart of Iron are capable of great feats of strength and stamina, albeit at the expense of finesse and awareness. Twice a day, a Disciple can employ the Heart of Iron, raising his or her Strength and Constitution scores by +4 and gaining a +2 bonus on Will Saves. However, the character also suffers a -2 penalty to AC and cannot

Table 2-7: Iron Hand Disciple Class Features

Level	*Attack*	*Fort.*	*Ref.*	*Will*	*Unarmed Damage*	*Class Features*
1	+0	+2	+2	+2	d8	Student of Perfection (Ex), Iron Hand Attacks (Ex)
2	+1	+3	+3	+3	d10	Crushing Blow 1 (Su)
3	+2	+3	+3	+3	d10	Breaking Blow (Ex)
4	+3	+4	+4	+4	d10	Body Hardening 1 (Ex), Heart of Iron (Su)
5	+3	+4	+4	+4	d10	Crushing Blow 2 (Su)
6	+4	+5	+5	+5	d12	Body Hardening 2 (Ex)
7	+5	+6	+6	+6	d12	Crushing Blow 3 (Su)
8	+6	+6	+6	+6	d12	Body Hardening 3 (Ex)
9	+6	+6	+6	+6	d12	Heart of Steel (Su)
10	+7	+7	+7	+7	d20	Iron Body (Sp)

Table 2-8: Sword Saint Class Features

Level	*Attack*	*Fort.*	*Ref.*	*Will*	*Jumping Bonus*	*Class Features*
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	x1	Flurry of Blows (Ex)
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	x1	Still Mind (Ex)
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	x2	Deflect Arrows (Ex)
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	x2	Superior Weapon Focus (Ex)
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	x2	Leap of the Clouds (Su)
6	+6	+5	+5	+2	x2	Lightning Reflexes (Ex)
7	+7	+6	+6	+2	x3	Superior Weapon Specialization (Ex)
8	+8	+6	+6	+2	x3	Perfect Balance (Su)
9	+9	+6	+6	+3	x3	Wholeness of Body (Su)
10	+10	+7	+7	+3	x3	Spellcleaver (Su)

use any skills that require concentration. The Heart of Iron lasts for three rounds plus a number of rounds equal to the character's modified Constitution bonus. Once it expires, the character is Fatigued. The penalties may be removed short of the usual eight hours if the character rests and does nothing for a number of minutes equal to the number of rounds during which he or she was under the influence of the Heart of Iron.

Body Hardening: Brutal physical training toughens a Disciple's body beyond the limits of ordinary humans. Characters gain a +1 natural AC bonus and Damage Reduction 2 for each level of Body Hardening they possess. Thus, a 10th Level Iron Hand Disciple has Damage Reduction 6/+1 and a +3 bonus to AC. Body Hardening is negated by magical weapons with a rating of +1 or more.

Heart of Steel: The Disciple's endurance has improved to the point where he or she is no longer Fatigued by performing Heart of Iron.

Iron Body: The character has become so tough that his or her skin becomes hard as iron. Once per day, the Disciple can cast the Iron Body spell. Caster level is equal to the Disciple's character level. Unlike the Iron Body spell, however, the Disciple does not take on the appearance of iron, merely its properties.

Sword Saint

Not everyone who seeks harmony with the Tao is a scholar or a priest. Sword Saints are Taoist philosophers who seek harmony amidst the chaos of battle. Despite the title, the Sword Saint is not necessarily a swordsman. Instead, he or she is a warrior who has pursued a degree of harmony with a chosen weapon of which few fighters can even conceive.

Unlike many warriors, however, Sword Saints choose their battles carefully. Many refuse to fight foes they deem unworthy of them, and no Sword Saint will waste blade or life without purpose. Some Sword Saints carry this philosophy so far that some consider them cowards. Still, once a Sword Saint finds a worthy cause, he or she will fight for it to the bitter end, even though Heaven itself may oppose him or her.

Requirements: Base Attack Bonus +6 or greater, Feats (Weapon Specialization — any melee weapon; Expertise, Quick Draw, Spring Attack)

Hit Die: d10

Skill Points: 2 + Int Bonus per level

Class Skills: Balance, Climb, Jump, Knowledge: Religion, and Tumble

Weapon Proficiency: The Sword Saint is proficient with simple and martial weapons and light armor in addition to any previous weapon and armor proficiencies.

Special Limitation: Seeker of the Tao. Sword Saints fight to achieve inner harmony amidst external chaos, not from a lust for battle. They loathe fighting unless they feel that it will provide them an adequate opportunity to further their quest for understanding or they are championing a cause. Consequently, Sword Saints may only possess one magical weapon (two if they are two-weapon fighters), which must be of their chosen type. Furthermore, Sword Saints will refuse to draw their magic weapons against unworthy foes. Opponents with Base Attack Bonuses of more than 5 points less than the Sword Saint's or total attack bonuses totaling more than 10 less than the Sword Saint's are generally considered unworthy, though the game master is the final arbiter of an enemy's merit. Alternately, the character may choose to fight unworthy foes so long as he or she does not draw the chosen weapon from its from its scabbard or selects a weapon with which the Sword Saint is not as proficient. Fighting with a sheathed weapon negates any enhancement bonuses it may have and does subdual damage.

Class Features: Sword Saints gain the following abilities at a rate detailed on Table 2-8.

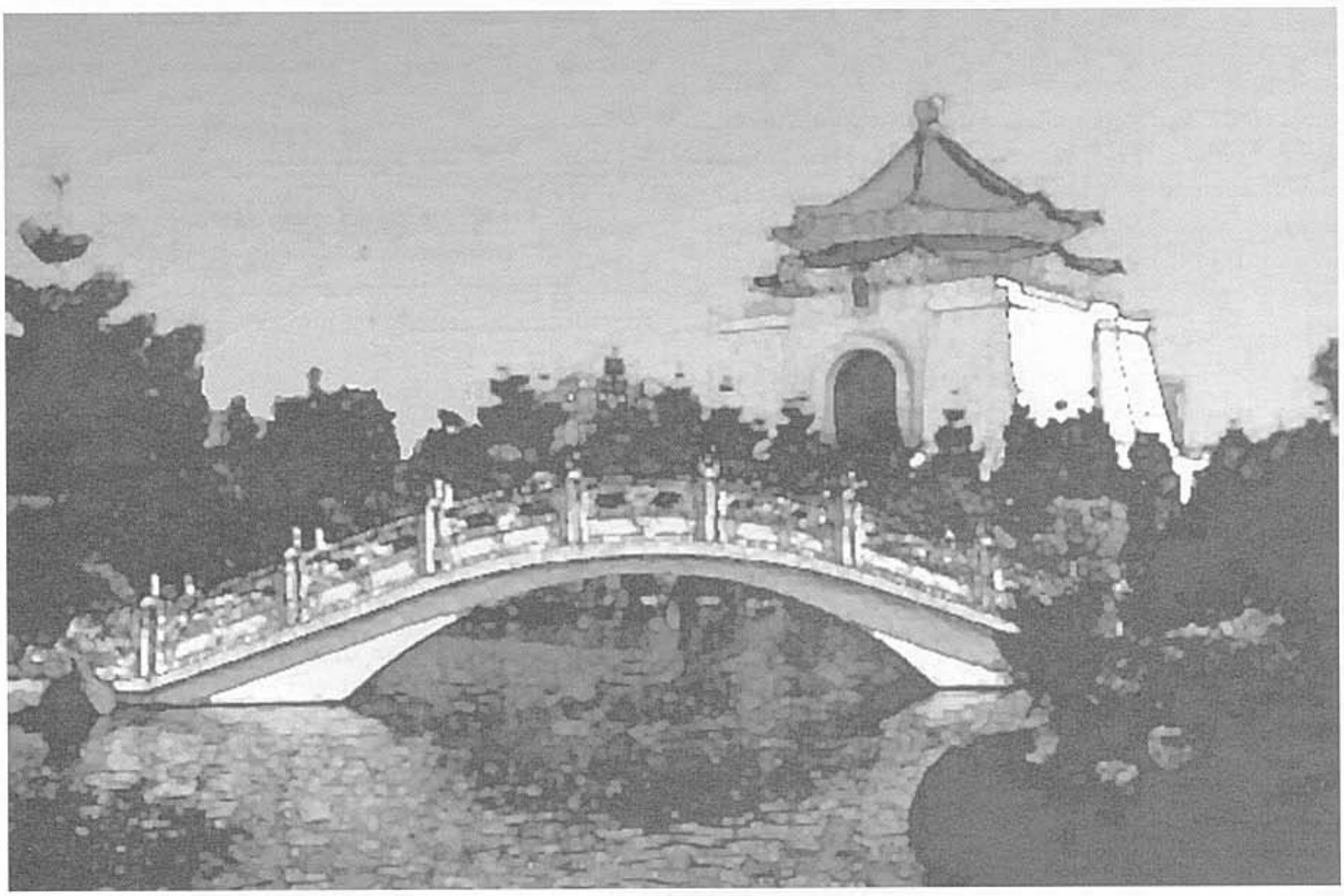
Jumping Bonus: This multiplier increases the Sword Saint's natural jumping distance.

Still Mind: As the Monk ability of the same name.

Flurry of Blows: The character may make an additional attack at his or her highest bonus when striking with the weapon selected for the Weapon Focus feat. All attacks suffer a -2 penalty when attacking with Flurry of Blows, however.

Deflect Arrows: The Sword Saint gains the Deflect Arrows feat for free but must be armed with his or her chosen weapon to employ it.

Superior Weapon Focus: At this level the character has found such harmony with his or her chosen weapon that he or she gains an additional +1 bonus to attack rolls when using it.



Leap of the Clouds: As the Monk ability of the same name.

Lightning Reflexes: The Sword Saint gains the Lightning Reflexes feat for free.

Superior Weapon Specialization: The character's harmony with the chosen weapon is now such that he or she gains an additional +2 bonus to damage rolls when using it.

Perfect Balance: As a free action, the character can reduce his or her effective weight to as little as one pound for purposes of standing on objects and gains a +30 insight bonus to all Balance rolls. Thus, a Sword Saint with Perfect Balance could, if he or she chose, stand atop a thatched roof, a narrow twig, or someone's head and have no fear of breaking through or falling.

Wholeness of Body: As the Monk ability of the same name.

Spellcleaver: At this level of proficiency and harmony, the Sword Saint can actually deflect certain spells with his or her weapon. Once per round, the character can use his or her chosen weapon to deflect ray or energy missile spells that would otherwise hit (including those that hit automatically). The character must make a Reflex Saving Throw against a DC of 15 + the caster level of the being launching the spell. If successful, the spell is deflected harmlessly away. The Sword Saint must be aware of the attack, not caught flat-footed, and have his or her weapon in hand to use this ability.

New Feats

As the birthplace of oriental martial arts, China is home to many complex fighting styles. To many martial artists, development of personal combat skills is a way of life. These feats allow dedicated martial artists to reap the benefits of their intense training and deep devotion to the warrior's path. Any feats listed as "Combat-related" may be purchased with bonus feats, such as those granted by the Fighter class.

Dual Weapon Attack
[General - Combat-related]

Prerequisites: Ambidexterity, Two-Weapon Fighting, and Improved Two-Weapon Fighting

Benefit: The character has mastered a weapon art that specializes in two-weapon combat to the point that the weapons have become an extension of his or her body. Those who possess this feat no longer must halve their damage bonus from a high Strength with off-hand weapons.

Grappling Finesse
[General - Combat-related]

Prerequisites: Improved Unarmed Strike and Weapon Finesse: Unarmed

Benefit: The character is trained in a style that emphasizes grappling with both armed and unarmed opponents. Characters who possess this feat may substitute their Dexterity for their Strength when determining their attack bonuses for grapple and trip checks.

Improved Grapple
[General - Combat-related]

Prerequisites: Improved Unarmed Strike and Improved Trip

Benefit: The character is trained in a style that emphasizes grappling with both armed and unarmed opponents. Characters who possess this feat may take a move equivalent action to make a grapple attack that does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Leap of the Monkey
[General]

Prerequisites: 5 ranks in Jump and 5 ranks in Climb

Benefit: Like a monkey, the character can spring quickly up walls without effort. Characters with this feat do not lose their Dexterity bonus to AC when climbing as long as they finish the climb in a single round.

Sticking
[General - Combat-related]

Prerequisites: Improved Grapple and Improved Trip

Benefit: The martial artist is trained to "stick" to an opponent and read his or her moves. By lightly touching an opponent, the character may anticipate the next action the foe will take. Consequently, characters with this feat may add +2 to all Disarm, Grapple, or Trip checks against a single opponent.

Superior Two Weapon Fighting
[General - Combat-related]

Prerequisites: Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, and Strength 15+

Benefit: The character is trained to fight with a pair of larger weapons. He or she suffers only a -2 attack roll penalty when fighting with two non-light weapons.

Thus, a medium-sized character with Superior Two-Weapon Fighting could wield two longswords at only a -2 attack roll penalty for each weapon rather than the usual -4.

Typhoon Attack [General - Combat-related]

Prerequisite: 5 ranks in Jump

Benefit: This acrobatic attack involves the character charging full-steam towards multiple opponents, attacking one of them, and then spinning at the last moment to strike a second. To perform this maneuver, the character must be fighting unarmed, with two weapons, or with a double weapon such as a staff. If he or she succeeds on a normal charge attack, the character may immediately make another attack at the same bonus against a second opponent within the threatened area.

Whirlwind Kick [General - Combat-related]

Prerequisites: Base Unarmed Attack Bonus +3 or greater, Improved Unarmed Strike, and Dexterity 15+

Benefit: This feat of dexterity involves the attacker spinning around to lash out with a kick so ferocious it can strike multiple opponents. The Whirlwind Kick is a full attack action and is considered an unarmed attack. If the character has multiple iterative attacks, the player may declare which of them is the Whirlwind Kick. If the blow lands successfully, the character inflicts damage as normal and may then make an extra unarmed attack at the same bonus against one other opponent in his or her threatened area. If the Whirlwind Kick misses, the attacker may still continue with any remaining unarmed attacks.

Willow Step [General - Combat-related]

Prerequisites: 5 ranks in Tumble and Dexterity 15+

Benefit: The character is exceptionally light on his or her feet and may easily dart around the battlefield. After making a charge attack, the character may continue to move to the full extent of his or her movement in a straight line, moving past the opponent on a successful Tumble check at DC 20.

Chinese Weapons

The Chinese rely on a wide variety of weapons and incorporate some of them into their martial arts forms. In addition to the standard simple and martial weapons, they also make use of some more exotic implements of war. The following weapons are all considered Exotic, and Monk characters proficient in them may use their Improved Unarmed Attack progression and Flurry of Blows skill when wielding them in combat.

Jiann (Cost 30 gp, Damage 1d6 [Piercing and Slashing], Crit 19-20 [x2], Weight 2 lbs.). This narrow, straight sword is double-edged and tapered for both cutting and thrusting. It is commonly known as a "Tai Ch'i Sword" due to its popularity among practitioners of that martial art. The Jiann is considered a light weapon, and most often used singly.

Hook Sword (Cost 20 gp, Damage 1d6 [Bludgeoning and Slashing], Crit 19-20 [x2], Weight 2 lbs.). This unusual weapon has a razor sharp hand guard and an unusual blunt "blade" that ends in a hook. The hook is used to snare weapons, and makes it easier to disarm foes. Characters armed with hook swords receive a +2 weapon bonus to their Disarm attack rolls. Hook swords are usually used in pairs. Monk characters' Flurry of Blows ability supersedes the extra attack granted by fighting with two weapons. For other characters, the hook sword is considered a small weapon.

Butterfly Sword (Cost 25 gp, Damage 1d8 [Slashing], Crit 19-20 [x2], Weight 2.5 lbs.). These short, thick blades are commonly used in pairs. They are very effective cutting weapons but useless for thrusting. Monk characters' Flurry of Blows ability supersedes the extra

attack granted by fighting with two weapons. For other characters, the butterfly sword is considered a small weapon.

Weapon Equivalencies

Many Chinese weapons look exotic, but for game purposes are best considered equivalents of other weapons.

• *Do* (Chinese Broad Sword) This curved, scimitar-like blade is equivalent to a longsword.

• *Fighting Wheels* Metal circles with sharp protrusions on the outer edge and a cloth or leather covered handgrip. Equivalent to short swords.

• *Kwan-Do* A polearm sporting a wide blade and equivalent to a glaive.

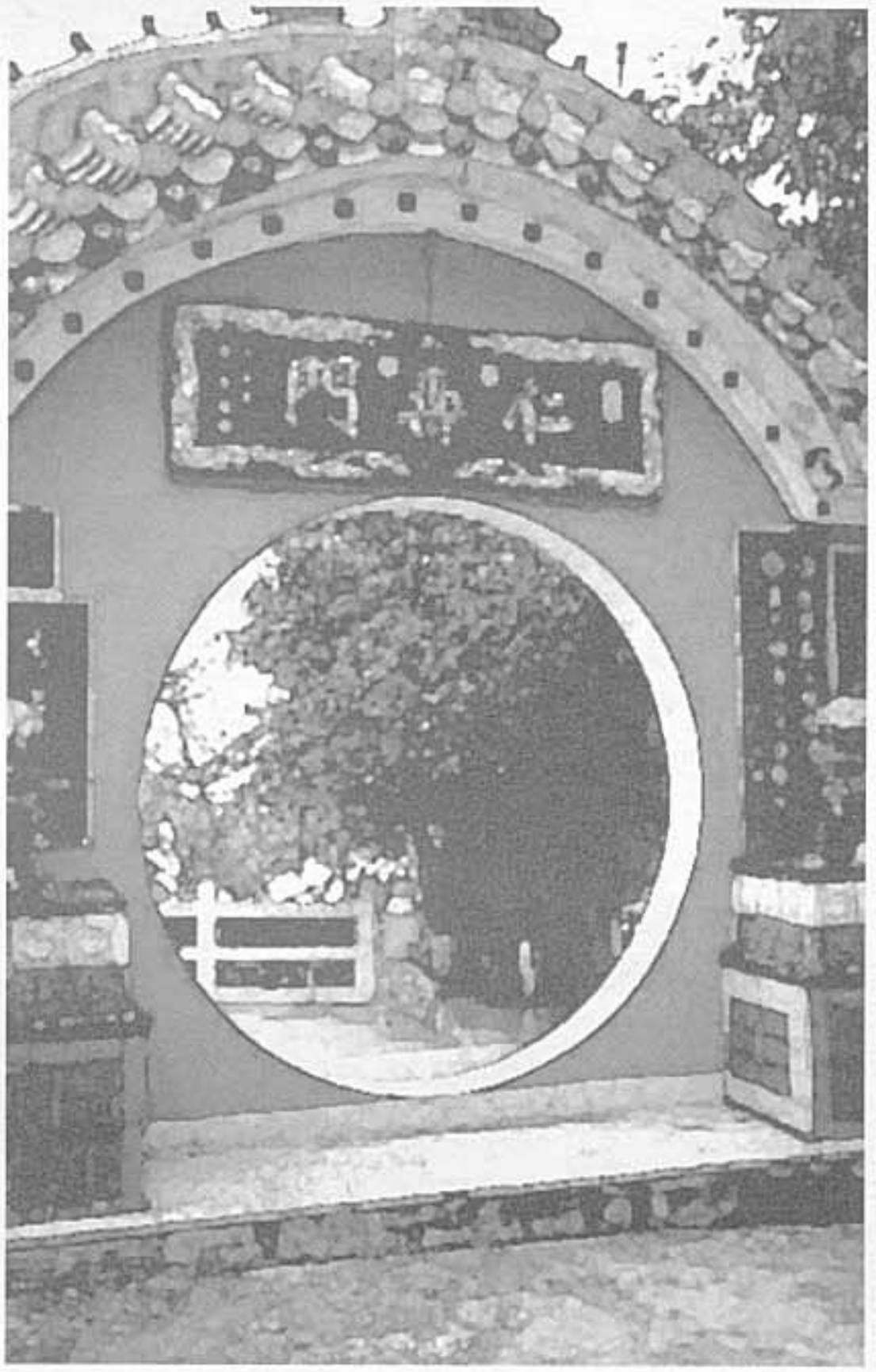
• *Tiger-Fork* This spear has three widely set thrusting points. Treat it as a trident.

Fireworks

In addition to a variety of unusual melee weapons, the Chinese also make use of gunpowder. Fireworks are a popular entertainment often used to add excitement to important events and celebrations.

In Mythic China, gunpowder is also used as a weapon. Some Chinese soldiers are equipped with rockets, which are most often used *en masse* to blast enemies and scatter organized formations with their explosions. Because of the training required to properly transport and fire rockets, they are considered martial weapons.

Rocket (Cost 200 gold, Damage 1d6 [Fire] 1d6 [Concussion], Burst Radius 5', Range Increment 200', Weight 10 lbs.). Often crafted to resemble dragons, Chinese rockets are mounted on wooden spikes, which are driven into the ground for aiming. It takes a full round action to aim and fire a rocket. Hitting with one is equivalent to performing a successful ranged touch attack. Enemies suffering a direct hit from a rocket are not entitled to a Saving Throw to avoid damage. Any other targets within the blast radius may make a Reflex Saving Throw (DC 20) for half damage. Alternatively, an attacker may simply launch a rocket at an area, relying solely on the blast radius to damage foes. In this case, he or she makes a ranged touch attack vs. AC 10. All enemies within the area of effect are entitled to a Reflex Saving Throw (DC 20) for half damage. Targets of an area rocket attack may add deflection AC bonuses to their Saving Throws. If a rocket attack misses, it scatters just as a grenade-like missile.



Part 3: For Love or Money

Presented below is an introductory adventure designed to let players get a feel for what being a great hero of China's mythic age is all about. As it contains the secrets of the adventure, it is for game masters only. "For Love or Money" is designed for four to six characters of 11th through 14th Level, and it tells a story that could easily have happened during the Three Kingdoms Period. Most names and places are fictional, though they do incorporate many common themes of Chinese History and Myth as well as a story familiar to many cultures.

The adventure begins in the city of Pai-San on the Wei side of the Wei-Shu border. Pai-San, literally "the Crane's Mountain," is the seat of the wealthy Chiang family, which watches over a large stretch of border for the warrior-king, Tsao Tsao. Though nominally Tsao Tsao's subjects, the Chiang really hold a great deal of autonomy. One of the many Shih houses, the Chiang worked their way back into prominence with the fall of the Han Dynasty, and their distance from Loyang's watchful eye allows them a great deal of freedom.

0 5 10
Scale in Feet

Lord Chiang and Wives
Ancestors
Kim Nan
Children
Married Sons
Shrine
Married Sons
Guests
Gates
Guests
School-room
Servants
Cistern
Servants
Teacher's Quarters

Chiang House

River Ford

0 50 100
Scale in Feet

Rise
Lim Troops
Road
To Pai San
River
Ford
River
X
Devil Appears
Road

Pai San

0 50 100
Scale in Feet

Square
Cistern
Cistern
Guards
Guards
East Gate
Main House
East Gate
Cistern
Cistern
Main Road
Main Road
Square
Stables
Kitchen
Storage
Square
Town
Cistern
Square
To Lake

Surrounding Farms

China

Kingdom of Wei
Luoyang
Pai San
An-Yung
Nan King
Chengtu
Kingdom of Shu
Kingdom of Wu

0 150 300
Scale in Miles

Chiang Warden
2nd Level Ranger

Size: Medium (Human)
Hit Dice: 2d10 +2
Hit Points: 22
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 16 (+2 Dex, +3 Masterwork Armor, +1 Masterwork Buckler)
Attacks: Masterwork Longsword +5 Melee (1d8+2) Masterwork Mighty Composite Longbow and Masterwork Arrows +6 (1d8+1)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1
Abilities: Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8
Alignment: Lawful Neutral
Skills: Hide 7
Move Silently 7
Spot 6
Wilderness Lore 6
Feats: Point Blank Shot
Precise Shot
Track
Special: 5 Potions of Cure Light Wounds
1 Potion of Hide

Note: The potions listed are per squad of 25 men. Thus, each squad has five Potions of Healing and one of Hide, not each individual soldier.

Across the border, about 100 miles away through the wilderness, lies the town of An-Yung, "the Silver Garden," bastion of the powerful Lim Clan.

During the Three Kingdoms Period, the Chinese paid a great deal of attention to the exploits of powerful adventurers. The PCs' reputation will precede them almost anywhere they go. Likewise, there are any number of reasons that word of the adventure would reach the heroes' ears. A few possibilities are presented below.

1. Traveling heroes, perhaps emulating the warrior-princes of Shu, hear that the head of the Chiang family is offering a huge reward for some unspecified mission.
2. Mercenary heroes are approached by a commanding officer and sent to uncover the truth regarding rumors of a kidnapped princess and the rich reward promised for her safe return.
3. The politically astute learn that Lord Chiang is offering a huge reward to anyone who can stop the bandit army that has held sway over much of the wilderness.
4. Characters with ties to the underworld hear rumors that a bandit army known as the Black Tigers has pulled off the ultimate robbery and stolen a huge treasure hoard.

Act 1: Pai-San

Pai-San is built on a hill overlooking a small, spring-fed lake. The hill proper is dominated by the Chiang family's fortress home — a large stone and wood compound that perches on top of the rise. The stronghold itself is surrounded by a sturdy stone wall and has two gates that face east and west. The town surrounds the base of the hill and is populated by farmers and craftsmen who live under the Chiang family's protection. In times of trouble, the entire town can withdraw behind the fortress walls for safety, where well maintained food stores and plentiful water supplies help beat a siege. Farms dominate the rest of the countryside.

The lake is the key to Pai-San's prosperity. It provides water for drinking and farming and also supports a large population of freshwater shellfish. In addition to attracting the beautiful white cranes that like to forage in the shallows, the shellfish beds also yield some of the finest freshwater pearls in China. These are highly prized throughout the Three Kingdoms, and the Chiang family protects them fiercely, both to make sure that their resource continues to renew itself and to prevent outsiders from poaching. The Chiang only harvest pearls once a year, during the summer solstice, and they forbid anyone from disturbing the shellfish or the cranes that serve to alert the guards of poachers during the rest of the year.

Pai-San is a well-guarded city. The Chiang maintain a small army of elite wardens (25 five-man squads of 2nd Level Rangers and 25 officers who are 4th Level

Rangers), who guard the city, protect the shellfish beds, and track bandits through the countryside. Additionally, Lord Chiang requires that all peasants who live within his territory maintain some battle readiness. Each family is required to contribute one man between the ages of 14 and 40, if possible, to Pai-San's defense. These militia are effectively 1st Level Warriors. The Chiang have also invested a small fortune in the defense of their gates. When the walls around Pai-San were built, the Chiang consulted a Geometer on its Feng Shui and paid to have the gates enchanted with a True Seeing spell. This spell affects the gate guards and extends outward from the walls.

Arrival

The characters should arrive in Pai-San just in time for the Pearl Festival. Merchants come from hundreds of miles around to bid on this exclusive harvest. In addition to the fortune made from the pearls themselves, Pai-San grows rich off the festivities as well. The entire city is brightly decorated, and entertainers and merchants fill the streets.

The characters should have some time to get a feel for the city and to follow up on the rumors they are pursuing. PC's seeking to investigate news of the kidnapping should make Gather Information (DC 15) checks. If they succeed, they meet an old woman that serves in the Chiang compound. She refuses to give her name, but respect for the elderly should prevent the PC's from harassing her. Many Chinese simply refer to the elderly as "grandmother" or "grandfather" as a term of respect. The old woman, who used to care for Princess Kim Nan, tells the party that Kim is missing. The princess had been sent to the Shu city of An-Yung to meet her new husband (the eldest son of the Lim family) to ease the political rivalry that exists between the two families. To protect her from bandits, she was sent in the guise of a religious pilgrim with a contingent of heavily armed guards and two monks. However, word arrived yesterday that Kim never made it to An-Yung. One of the monks, the only survivor of Kim's guard, made it back to Pai-San with news that they had been ambushed by a bandit army called the Black Tigers. The princess was captured.

For every 5 points above 15 on the Gather Information check, the PC's should find one of the additional following leads:

1. A farmer tells the party that there is a new slave turning the grindstone in the mill. He's apparently a criminal whom Lord Chiang, in a fit of rage, had castrated for his crime. The remains of his organ

Chiang Warden Officer
4th Level Ranger

Size:	Medium (Human)
Hit Dice:	4d10 +4
Hit Points:	32
Initiative:	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	30 ft.
AC:	16 (+2 Dex, +4 Armor [+1 magical bonus, +3 studded leather armor bonus], +1 Masterwork Buckler)
	Masterwork Longsword +7 Melee (1d8+2) Masterwork Mighty Composite Longbow and Masterwork Arrows +9 Ranged (1d8+1)
Face/Reach:	5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.
Saves:	Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8
Alignment:	Lawful Neutral
Skills:	Hide 8 Move Silently 8 Spot 12 Wilderness Lore 7
Feats:	Point Blank Shot Precise Shot Track
Weapon Focus:	Mighty Composite Longbow
Equipment:	Masterwork weapons and armor 20 masterwork arrows 5 Potions of Healing Potion of Hiding Eyes of the Eagle 250 gold in assorted gems and coins.

were ordered burned so that even after death, he can never be a whole man. The farmer does not know what the prisoner could have done to deserve such severe retribution.

2. A young concubine of Lord Chiang's, out enjoying the festival, informs the party that she feels sorry for her old friend, the princess. The

Sung Kuan Jiang 12th Level Wizard (Conjurer)

Size: Medium (Human)
Hit Dice: 12d4 +36
Hit Points: 67
Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex, +4, Improved Initiative)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 16 (+4 Dex, +2 Ring)
Attacks: Quarterstaff +6/+1 Melee (1d6)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +9
Abilities: Str 11, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 10
Alignment: Lawful Evil
Skills: Alchemy 20
Concentration 16
Knowledge: Arcana 20
Knowledge: Religion 20
Scry 20
Sense Motive 9
Spellcraft 20

Feats: Combat Casting, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Craft Staff, Forge Ring, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Empower Spell, Improved Initiative

Special Qualities: Scribe Scroll
Languages (Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic, Infernal, Sylvan)

Spells:
1st: Mage Armor, Obscuring Mist, Summon Monster I, Shield, Mount, Magic Missile
2nd: Glitterdust, Protection From Arrows, Summon Swarm, Acid Arrow, Summon Monster II
3rd: Flame Arrow, Phantom Steed, Summon Monster III, Sleet Storm, Stinking Cloud, Fireball
4th: Black Tentacles, Summon Monster IV, Minor Creation, Solid Fog, Stoneskin
5th: Cloudkill, Summon Monster V, Wall of Iron, Wall of Stone, Lesser Planar Binding
6th: Planar Binding, Acid Fog, Summon Monster VI

Equipment: Crystal Ball
Ring of Protection +2
Ring of Shooting Stars
Wand of Enfeeblement
3 Beads of Force
5 heavily embroidered silk robes (500 gold each)
2 pairs brocade slippers (100 gold each)
statuette of Ti carved of onyx and inlaid with gold and jade (2,000 gold), 12,000 gold

Kuan Jiang is a middle-aged eunuch with a shaved head and black, piercing eyes. Though he never seems to speak above a whisper, his voice carries. He is a well-known diviner, though the accuracy of his predictions is usually due to the fact that he arranges events to bring about his own prophecies. Kuan Jiang is a loyal servant of the Lim family because they have promised to restore his manhood if he successfully brings down the Chiang. He dresses in rich silk, heavily embroidered with decorations and symbols of power.

young Lord Lim is known to drink and fight frequently, and concubines who have somehow displeased him have a nasty habit of disappearing.

3. A silk merchant from Shu mentions that Lord Lim has pledged the services of his chief eunuch, the wizard, Sung Kuan Jiang, to help Lord Chiang in his troubles. Kuan Jiang is a well-known diviner whose predictions are uncannily accurate, even for someone of his craft.

An Invitation to Dinner

Eventually, Lord Chiang will learn of the presence of well-known heroes in his city, assuming that he didn't request their presence either himself or through some other patron. Either way, he will dispatch his chief concubine, Li Shin, to locate the great heroes and bring them to the Chiang compound.

Li Shin locates the party soon enough and bids them to come before Lord Chiang. Their host would be honored to entertain such great guests and might also seek to purchase their services. An invitation to partake in the hospitality of the local potentate is a great honor, and PC's should gladly accept. Li Shin promises that Lord Chiang plans to make them an offer of a rich reward in return for their skilled assistance.

Dinner with Lord Chiang

This scene can be as long or as short as the group wants. If the players are interested in high-flying martial arts, fast-paced chases and cutting their way through bandits, then speed events along. If, however, the players prefer to role-play out the meal, then get as creative as possible.

Li Shin ultimately leads the PC's past the walls and into the Chiang compound. Regularly spaced and well-manned watchtowers allow access only through the two gates. The western gate opens in the morning, while the eastern gate opens in the evening. This way, any enemy attacking the Chiang will be forced to stare into the sun at either gate.

The family home dominates the compound. The stone and wood structure is like most of the rest but much larger. The main building is home to Lord Chiang, his wife, his three concubines, their ten young children, and any number of servants and guards. The center of the home is a great courtyard, surrounded by gardens. Here, Lord Chiang has prepared a lavish meal for himself, his family, and some select guests. Li Shin shows the PC's to a guest suite where they can freshen up and change into appropriate clothing. Lord Chiang has provided silk clothes suitable for prestigious guests in case the PC's don't have anything suitable with them, but he does expect his property back.

Two servants arrive to escort the PC's to dinner a short time later. They give the heroes a wide berth and quickly disappear once the characters are seated at the large, low table. Lord and Lady Chiang arrive with their guests, and then servants start serving dinner.

Li Shin
6th Level Monk/6th Level Dim Mak Practitioner

Size:	Medium (Human)
Hit Dice:	12d8 +12
Hit Points:	82
Initiative:	+8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed:	30 ft.
AC:	19 (+4 Dex, +3 Wisdom, +2 Class Bonus)
Attacks:	Unarmed Strike +22/+14/+12/+7 Melee (1d12+2)
Face/Reach:	5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.
Saves:	Fort +11, Ref +14, Will +13
Abilities:	Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 14
Alignment:	Lawful Evil
Skills:	Balance 18, Climb 17, Concentration 16, Hide 18, Diplomacy 17, Listen 17, Tumble 18
Feats:	Deflect Arrows
Improved Critical:	Unarmed Strike, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip
Weapon Finesse:	Unarmed Strike
Weapon Focus:	Unarmed Strike, Whirlwind Kick, Willow Step

Li Shin (continued)

Special Attacks:	Unarmed Strike Stunning Attack Chakra Strike 3 Blinding Strike	Atemi Attack Pain Touch
Special Qualities:	Slow Fall (30') Purity of Body Fast Movement Extra Stunning Attacks	Evasion Still Mind AC Bonus Flurry of Blows
Equipment:	3 Silk Robes (servant class, 100 gold each) Amulet of Proof against Detection and Location Slippers of Spider-Climbing	

Li Shin is an exotic beauty in her early twenties. Sinuous and graceful, her gentlest touch can send shivers of pleasure down men's spines. As Lord Chiang's head concubine, Li Shin dresses in rich clothing, but she has secretly altered her wardrobe so it can be easily removed if she needs to fight or run. Her clothes also contain many hidden pockets that she can use to smuggle objects. Li Shin wears long, false fingernails to add to her illusion of harmlessness and always presents herself as a loyal and caring wife and an old friend of the Princess.

The meal is lavish and exotic with many local specialties, including fish and shellfish harvested from the lake, as well as chicken, pork, beef, rice, and vegetables. The last course is a plain bowl of rice, which guests are not supposed to eat. To eat the rice is to tell the host that the meal was insufficient. Most of the guests at the table are merchants looking to trade silk, jade, and gold for the riches of the lake. Talk is mostly about business, though a Sense Motive (DC 20) check will reveal that the Chiang and their staff are not particularly interested in the conversation.

After the meal is over, servants bring out wine and fruit, and Lord Chiang finally addresses the PC's directly. The Black Tigers have kidnapped his daughter, Kim Nan, and stolen her dowry. Lord Chiang had betrothed Kim Nan to Lim Jan Wei, the eldest son of the Lim family. The Lim have been rivals of the Chiang for generations, and both families hoped that this marriage would put an end to the years of often bloody conflict. ***A Bardic Knowledge or Knowledge: History check at DC 20 will reveal that the Chiang were once part of the Lim family.*** About a century ago, a dispute broke out between the family patriarch, a loyal Imperial bureaucrat, and his eldest son. Though stories of the conflict vary, most believe that the son balked at an undesirable, but politically convenient, arranged marriage. The most popular version of the tale is that the son fell in love with a traveling swordswoman and abandoned his family to be with her. They settled in Pai-San and grew wealthy off the pearl trade. Relations between the two families have not been good since.

Lord Chiang wants to end the conflict. Kim Nan is one of the great beauties of the age, and many rich and powerful young men have sought her hand. He is willing to offer a treasure hoard worth 10,000 gold per PC and the services of his chief alchemist, the wizard Xiang Xiao, who will enchant one magic item per PC free of charge. Lord Chiang is offering a huge sum of money for the return of his daughter, but even that sum pales in comparison to the value of Kim Nan's dowry. In addition to the rich reward, the PC's will always have friends in Pai-San, and word of their exploits will spread even further. To the Chinese, fame is the next best thing to immortality. Chinese adventurers would consider the reward well worth pursuing.

Lord Chiang tells the PC's that he has no idea how the Black Tigers found Kim Nan. She had been traveling in disguise as a religious pilgrim. The route was a secret, and Kim Nan left late at night so no one would see her. He suspects that there may be a spy in Pai-San, though he is unsure who it might be. He ordered Chan Pao, the lone survivor of Kim Nan's escort, enslaved in order to warn any traitors that a fate worse than death may await them. Lord Chiang wants the PC's to find Kim Nan and return her and her dowry safely home. He tells the PC's that the Lim have offered to travel to Pai-San for the wedding as a gesture of good will instead of risking another attack. He would gather his army and pursue his daughter, but the Pearl Festival is still going on, and he cannot leave. Pai-San is vulnerable during the festival because so many outsiders come to the city,

Lord Chiang
14th Level Fighter

Size: Medium (Human)
Hit Dice: 14d10 + 28
Hit Points: 120
Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 13 (+3 Dex)
Attacks: Kwan-Do +19/+14/+9 (1d10 + 6)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft./10 ft.
Saves: Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +5
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 24, Wis 12, Cha 16
Alignment: Lawful Neutral
Skills: Climb 21
Craft: Stonemason 10
Craft: Weaponsmith 10
Diplomacy 9
Gather Information 9
Ride 5
Jump 21
Handle Animal 10
Swim 5
Feats: Improved Initiative
Great Cleave
Expertise
Improved Unarmed Strike
Power Attack
Spring Attack
Cleave
Dodge
Leadership
Mobility
Sunder

and many rich merchants bring large personal guards with them to protect their wealth. In order to protect his people and his lands, Lord Chiang must remain behind and present a strong facade. Otherwise, Pai-San will fall into chaos. Lord Chiang asks that the PC's leave before dawn while the festival sleeps so as not to arouse suspicion. His men will see the party safely out of Pai-San by the west gate.

A Night in Pai-San

After the meal ends, the heroes have several hours to do as they wish. On their way out, Lin Sung, Lord Chiang's cohort, approaches discreetly. Lin Sung is a well-known Sword Saint who has fought beside Lord Chiang for many years. He feels that the Chiang are a wise family that treats its subjects with respect and honor, and he has pledged himself to their protection. He also sees to the safety of Pai-San, and will, if the characters have caused trouble previously, warn them to behave while they enjoy the rest of their stay.

The rest of the night is uneventful. The festival is full of merchants from all over China who each have their own rumors and agendas. At the GM's option, some may approach the heroes with offers of their own. There is nothing wrong with accepting another job, but the PC's should keep their priorities straight. The princess is in danger, and her safety is worth a lot of money. Throughout the night, birds of all shapes and sizes come and go, foraging and resting

Lord Chiang (continued)

Weapon Focus: Kwan-Do Weapon
Specialization: Kwan-Do Whirlwind Attack
Equipment: See below.

Lord Chiang is tall for a Chinese, and he is built like an ox. Though he is starting to go gray, there is no trace of softness anywhere on him. He fought for General Tsao Tsao for years and was rewarded with the borderlands that he loves so deeply. Lord Chiang is still a soldier, and avoids decadence whenever possible. He cares deeply about his people and would gladly lay down his life to protect his lands and his family.

Lord Chiang has nearly half a million gold in liquid assets at his disposal. His non-liquid ones make him considerably richer. For all practical purposes, he can obtain anything the characters may require.

Xiang Xiao
7th Level Wizard (Enchanter)/ 6th Level Alchemist

Size: Medium (Human)
Hit Dice: 7d4 + 6d6 + 36
Hit Points: 80
Initiative: +3 (+3 Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 13 (+3 Dex)
Attacks: Quarterstaff +6/+1 Melee (1d6)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.
Saves: Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +12
Abilities: Str 9, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 22, Wis 14, Cha 11
Alignment: Neutral Good

Skills: Concentration 18; Alchemy 23; Profession: Apothecary 12; Knowledge: Arcana 15; Profession: Brewer 7; Knowledge: Nature 15; Profession: Cook 7; Knowledge: Religion 15; Spellcraft 21; Heal 1

Feats: Brew Potion; Craft Wand; Craft Magic Arms and Armor; Forge Ring; Craft Wondrous Item; Scribe Scroll; Empower Spell

Skill Focus: Alchemy

Special Qualities: Brewing Bonus; Brew Elixir; Analyze Chemical; Brew Tablet; Chemical Resistant; Substitute Mineral; Brew Paint

Languages: Celestial, Draconic, Hindi, Infernal, Sylvan

Xiang Xiao (continued)

Spells:

1st: True Strike; Charm; Hypnotism; Sleep; Comprehend Languages; Mage Armor; Shield

2nd: Tasha's Hideous Laughter; Glitterdust; Bull's Strength; Invisibility; Endurance; Cat's Grace

3rd: Hold Person; Suggestion; Dispel Magic; Fly; Protection from Elements; Halt Undead

4th: Charm Monster; Confusion; Lesser Geas; Emotion; Minor Globe of Invulnerability; Remove Curse

5th: Dominate Person; Feeblemind; Hold Monster; Mind Fog; Permanency

6th: Mass Suggestion; Geas/Quest; Globe of Invulnerability

7th: Power Word Stun; Insanity

Equipment: Cloak of Minor Displacement; Glove of Storing; Headband of Intellect +2; Type V Necklace of Fireballs; Wand of Magic Missiles (3rd Level Caster); 3 Silk Robes, heavily embroidered (600 gold each)

Xiang Xiao is a graying little man with a long mustache and beard. His bright eyes dance with good humor, and he always seems to have a joke on his mind. In public, Xiang wears expensive, voluminous robes. In his lab, he strips down to a simple tunic and pants for work. Xiang keeps his Wand of Magic Missiles hidden in his Glove of Storing.

around the lake. At this point, the GM should make note of the following information:

1. Kim Nan engineered her own abduction. Her friend, Li Shin, told her the stories about Lim Jan Wei, her future husband. Jan Wei is rumored to be a murderer who kills his concubines if they displease him or if he grows tired of them. He is a drunkard and a fop who preys on those who are weaker than he. Kim Nan is a free-spirited girl, and the prospect of life as the property of her husband terrifies her. For the past year, she has been sneaking out of Pai-San with Li Shin, who brings her to an old friend: a retired soldier who has been teaching Kim the arts of swordplay. Kim Nan was a good student and a fast learner. On one of these excursions, bandits attacked Li Shin and Kim Nan. Before they were overpowered, a lone stranger charged into battle and easily defeated three men before the bandits routed and fled into the woods. This was Kim Nan's first meeting with Black Tiger. Kim Nan eventually stopped visiting Li Shin's friend, for she had found a new master. Black Tiger showed her many things, only some of which had to do with swordplay. When she found out that her father had betrothed her to Lim Jan Wei, Kim Nan asked Li Shin to break into her father's office and find the plans. When she learned the route, the princess sent word to Black Tiger and arranged everything. Kim is in love with Black Tiger and has no desire to leave him for the killer Jan Wei.
2. Chan Pao works the mill by night, when farmers bring in rice and grain to be ground into flour. Lord Chiang keeps him chained to the millstone by a steel collar welded around his neck. If the PC's visit the mill to speak with him, they see him toiling naked and unmanned, turning the millstone by himself. His rigorous training is all that keeps him going. Chan Pao will tell the party what he knows as he works. The ambush happened at the midpoint of their journey, as they were fording a river. Ten riders and forty footmen attacked out of nowhere. Though they were prepared for trouble, they did not expect such overwhelming odds. In the midst of the battle, one of the riders cut his way to Kim Nan's coach and seized it, driving away at a gallop. The commander of the guard ordered Chan Pao to flee for Pai-San so that he might tell Lord Chiang what happened. Strangely, the raiders knew exactly when and where to strike the convoy at its most vulnerable moment. Their outriders had seen no scouts, and had detected no hostile movements. It was almost as if Black Tiger knew exactly where they would be their most vulnerable and simply laid in wait for them to appear. Chan Pao wants to get away from the mill. His failure to protect Kim Nan shames him even more than his mutilation, and he wants a chance to make things right. He will offer to help the party find Kim Nan if they will set him free.
3. Li Shin and Lin Sung actually work for the Lim. They infiltrated the Chiang household years ago, and have been working steadily to bring the family down. They encouraged Kim Nan to become headstrong and willful, and also encouraged the Chiang to offer her as a bride to Jan Wei as a means to bring an end to generations of rivalry. Working with Kuan Jiang, the Lim eunuch wizard, Lin Sung used the Chiang wardens to locate Black Tiger and lure him toward Pai-San. Meanwhile, Li Shin staged the bandit attack on herself and Kim Nan in order to put Kim Nan

Lin Sung
6th Level Fighter/7th Level Sword Saint

Size: Medium (Human)
Hit Dice: 13d10 +39
Hit Points: 102
Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 18 (+4 Dex, +4 Bracers of Armor)
Attacks: 2 Butterfly Swords +17/+15+/+12 /+7 Melee (1d8+10, 1d8+8)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.
Saves: Fort +14, Ref +14, Will +6
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 14
Alignment: Lawful Evil

Lin Sung (continued)

Skills: Balance 5; Climb 13; Craft: Weaponsmithing 10; Jump 20; Knowledge: Religion 5; Swim 11; Tumble 14

Feats: Deflect Arrows; Dodge; Improved Disarm; Mobility; Improved Initiative; Lightning Reflexes; Quick Draw; Spring Attack; Weapon Focus: Butterfly Sword; Two-Weapon Fighting; Weapon Spec.: Butterfly Sword

Special Qualities: Flurry of Blows; Still Mind; Superior Weapon Focus; Leap of the Clouds; Superior Weapon Specialization

Equipment: Two +2 Butterfly Swords; Two Potions of Cure Serious Wounds; Bracers of Armor +4

Lin Sung is short but compact and powerful. He is in his late twenties and has served the Chiang for the past ten years. He dresses in high quality but simple clothing and eschews embroidery or adornment. His clothes are loose-fitting and made for mobility. Lin Sung rarely speaks, preferring to remain in the background and observe.

together with the charismatic bandit chieftain. The willful princess did the rest. While Lord Chiang is preoccupied with the Pearl Festival and the heroes are off searching for Kim Nan, the Lim intend to move forces into Pai-San, ostensibly to help with the search. In reality, Kuan Jiang, Li Shin, and Lin Sung plan to stage a coup from within the city, kill the Chiang, and seize Pai-San for the Lim. This information is closely guarded. Only the three conspirators know the full details of the plan. They have quietly eliminated anyone who has come too close to the truth, while maneuvering themselves into positions of importance within both families. They expect to present Pai-San to the Lim on a silver platter and collect a huge reward.

Chan Pao
3rd Level Monk

Size: Medium (Human)
Hit Dice: 3d8 +6
Hit Points: 28
Initiative: +3 (Dex)
Speed: 40 ft.
AC: 15 (+3 Dex, +2, Wis)
Attacks: Unarmed Strike +2 (1d6+1)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.
Saves: Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +5
Abilities: Str 13, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 12
Alignment: Lawful Good

Skills: Balance 7; Climb 4; Hide 9; Jump 5; Move Silently 9; Listen 8; Swim 2; Tumble 9

Feats: Deflect Arrows; Dodge; Weapon Finesse (Unarmed); Mobility

Special Attacks: Unarmed Strike; Stunning Attack.

Special Qualities: Evasion; Still Mind

Chan Pao is a bald young man in his late teens. He is in top physical and mental condition due to his rigorous martial arts training, but his punishment for failing to protect Kim Nan will soon start taking its toll on his psyche unless the heroes rescue him. He currently toils naked, chained to his post by a steel collar, but he is eager for a chance to redeem himself.

Act 2: On the Road

Whether or not the party chooses to take Chan Pao with them, they can follow the route that Kim Nan took. On fast horses, the characters can reach the ford much quicker than Kim Nan's caravan did. It will take them three days of travel rather than the week it took the caravan.

Before running the next encounter, have any PC's capable of doing so make three Scry checks vs. DC 25 (one each day) to discern that they are being magically observed. The character must have the Scry skill to make this check. Once per day, Kuan Jiang looks in on the party's progress via scrying magic. He has dispatched elite soldiers disguised as Black Tigers to the area, and holds a Devil (Cornugon, see sidebar) he has summoned in reserve should the soldiers be insufficient to the cause of destroying the heroes.

Ambush!

On the third day, as the party approaches the ford, have them make a Spot check vs. DC 23 in order to notice the hidden imposters laying in wait. The Lim soldiers are positioned behind a rise 100 feet away from the ford. Characters who do not notice them will be caught flat-footed by the first volley of fire.

The ambush consists of 10 5th Level Fighters. In addition to their normal gear, each of them has been issued a single rocket. On the first round, all 10 will launch their rockets at the party from a range of 100 feet. They will try to layer the blasts in order to catch as many characters as possible within the maximum area of effect. Afterwards, they will attack with their heavy crossbows until the PC's reach melee range, at which point they will attack with their polearms, swords, and shields. ***The ambush is a Challenge Rating 12 encounter.***

Black Tiger Imposters
Lim Warriors in Disguise
5th Level Fighters

Size:	Medium (Human)
Hit Dice:	5d10+10
Hit Points:	37
Initiative:	+5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed:	20 ft.
AC:	19 (+1 Dex, +8 Armor [full plate], +2 Large Wooden Shield)
Attacks:	Kwan Do +9 Melee (1d10+3) Do +9 Melee (1d8+5) Heavy Crossbow +6 Ranged (1d10) Rocket +6 Ranged (1d6 Fire, 1d6 Concussion)
Face/Reach:	5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +2

Remember that these men are well-trained, seasoned professionals. If the PC's are using smaller weapons, they will attack with their polearms first, relying on the reach advantage to strike from a distance and gain attacks of opportunity as the heroes try to close in. They only draw swords and shields when the heroes get too close for polearm combat.

The men fear Kuan Jiang's wrath and will fight to the death unless the PC's can convince them that they can escape the wizard's fury. This can be an opportunity either for role-playing as the PC's try to end the confrontation without excessive bloodshed or for high-flying action as powerful characters rush into battle against a superior number of weaker foes.

Black Tiger Imposters (continued)

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Alignment: Lawful Neutral

Skills: Climb 6, Jump 6, Spot 8

Feats: Improved Initiative, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus: Kwan Do, Weapon Focus: Do, Weapon Specialization: Do, Power Attack

Equipment: Masterwork weapons and armor
20 masterwork quarrels
1500 gold in assorted gems and coins.

Note: The 1500 gold is the total amount among the entire troop, not for each individual soldier.

Whether the heroes triumph through fast talk or flashing blades and flying fists, they will have to deal immediately with Kuan Jiang's infernal minion. After they defeat the Lim soldiers, the Devil will materialize to attack. The merciless creature will appear on the other side of the river and engage first with its magical abilities, using range and its ability to fly to weaken the heroes, before it engages in melee combat. It is a scaly, vaguely humanoid monster from the deepest hells, standing over nine feet tall with huge wings and a powerful prehensile tail. The monster is intelligent, and has been bound in the mortal world for many years, forced to serve the whims of the hated Kuan Jiang. ***It is possible to dispel the magic that binds the Devil to the world. Doing so requires a Dispel Magic check vs. a DC of 23.*** If successful, the creature will thank the heroes for ending its bondage and vanish on its next action. Otherwise, it screams a furious battle cry and fights to the death.

Once the Cornugon has launched several spell attacks in order to soften the party up, it will land and engage in melee combat. It is a whirlwind of carnage as it lashes out with its whip, claws, teeth, and tail. High-flying action is in order here as the heroes either attempt to meet the creature midair or ground it quickly so as to attack from all sides. ***This is a Challenge Rating 12 encounter.***

Unknown to the PC's, Black Tiger himself has been observing the battle in disguise, along with the Druid Black Crane, who lurks nearby using his Wild Shape ability. Should the Cornugon prove too much for the heroes, the bandit leaders will come to their aid. If a PC falls, Black Tiger charges into battle and becomes a whirling engine of death as he drives the Cornugon back relentlessly. ***Black Crane, recognizing the Devil's supernatural defenses, empowers himself using his Greater Magic Fang spell and Wild Shape ability to transform into a Dire Animal before rushing the monster.***

Meeting Black Tiger

Once the heroes defeat the Cornugon, the bandits will confront them. Black Crane had noticed the Lim troops lying in ambush for someone and reported back to Black Tiger, who came to observe. The bandits want to know why Lim soldiers are disguising themselves as Black Tigers and what they were doing. Neither of the bandits is specifically looking for a fight with the PC's. They remain on guard but are willing to talk before leaping into combat.

The Lim soldiers are clearly not Black Tigers since, as Black Tiger himself will point out, they lack the distinctive tiger and crane tattoo that all the bandits wear over their hearts. Black Tiger and Black Crane are willing to show skeptical heroes their own tattoos, but will only do so if specifically asked. Questioning any prisoners or examining any bodies reveals that the men have weapons stamped with the seal of the Lim family armory.

The main things the bandits want to know is what the heroes are doing way out here, and why Lim imposters should be ambushing them. If it comes out that they are here to rescue the Princess, Black Tiger simply laughs. He will tell the PC's that, while he admires their courage and determination, their efforts are unfortunately for nothing. His wife has no desire to leave his side, though Black Tiger is happy to escort the heroes to his temporary camp so they can see for themselves. At this point, the PC's have a choice: they can attempt to fight Black Tiger and Black Crane, which may well prove fatal, or they can allow the bandits to show them the missing Princess.

Act 3: A Forest Encounter

If the heroes agree to go with Black Tiger, the bandits will lead them through the forest with no difficulties. The way leads far from the road, rapidly disappearing into larger and larger stands of woods and tall, slender bamboo groves. Everything goes green, and as day becomes evening, navigating becomes more and more difficult. Following Black Tiger is easy, but attempting to figure out his path is much more difficult. *Picking up on the path requires an Intuit Direction check vs. DC 20 and a Wilderness Lore check vs. DC 30 due to the decreasing light, lengthening shadows, and the ever-shifting bamboo forest.*

If the heroes attacked and defeated Black Tiger and Black Crane, they will have to find the camp on their own. Finding the path that Black Tiger took to reach the battle site will require a Wilderness Lore check vs. DC 20 because Black Tiger covered his tracks well. Following the path as it disappears into the forest becomes more and more difficult. The heroes will need to make Wilderness Lore checks each hour for eight hours as they pick their way slowly through the forest. The DC for the Wilderness Lore check starts at 15 and increases by 1 each hour.

New Monster: Cornugon
Devil from the Deepest Hells

Size: Large (Outsider)
Hit Dice: 12d8+36
Hit Points: 99
Initiative: +1 (Dexterity)
Speed: 20 ft. on ground, 50 ft. flying
AC: 27 (-1 size, +1 Dexterity, +2 Wisdom, +15 Natural)
Attacks: Whip +17/+12/+7/+2 Melee (1d10+3)
Claws +16/+16 Melee (1d4+5)
Bite +10 Melee (1d4+2)
Tail +10 Melee (1d3+2 and Wound)
Martial Strike +16 (1d6+5)
Face/Reach: 10 ft. x 10 ft./15 ft.
Saves: Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +12
Abilities: Str 21, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14
Alignment: Lawful Evil
Skills:

Bluff +14	Climb +16
Concentration +15	Hide +9
Move Silently +16	Listen +15
Sense Motive +14	Search +14
Tumble +7	Spot +14

Feats:

Power Attack	Cleave
Deflect Arrows	Sunder
Point Blank Shot	

New Monster: Cornugon (continued)

Special Attacks:
Spell-like Abilities:
Fear aura (5' radius, Will save, DC 17 to negate)
Stunning (whip attacks, Fortitude save, DC 17 to negate)
Wounding (tail attacks, Heal check, DC 10 to stop)
Point Blank Shot (whip)
Flurry of Blows (Martial Strike)

Special Qualities:
Damage reduction 20/+2
Spell Resistance 24
Regeneration 5 (normal damage from +2 or better holy and blessed weapons)
Immune to fire and poison
Resist cold and acid (20)
See perfectly in darkness
Telepathy (communicate with any creature within 100')
Unarmed Strike
Evasion
Stunning Attack (2/day, Fortitude Save, DC 13 to negate)

Spell-like Abilities (12th caster level; at will):
Animate dead
Charm person
Desecrate
Detect good
Detect magic
Detect thoughts
Dispel chaos
Dispel good
Magic circle against good
Major image
Produce flame
Pyrotechnics
Suggestion
Teleport without error (3/day)
Fireball
Lightning bolt (1/day)
Wall of fire

Rescuing Kim Nan

Eventually, the heroes make it to the bandit camp. Hidden among trees and bamboo stalks, the campsite would be nearly invisible if not for the sounds of pitched battle ahead. ***It is not necessary to make Listen checks to notice the sounds of combat, but a successful Spot check vs. DC 15 will point out the source of the trouble.*** A pair of clay warriors, similar to the type found guarding Imperial tombs, is on the rampage. ***These monsters' Damage Reduction and Weapon Immunity abilities (see sidebar) make them impossible for most of the Black Tigers present to handle.*** If Black Tiger and Black Crane are with the party, they will charge to the defense of their men. Regardless, the golems will wade through the camp, inexorably making their way towards the party. Using his divinations, Kuan Jiang located Princess Kim and sent the golems here to intercept the PC's and destroy both the Black Tigers and the princess. ***The pair of golems is a Challenge Rating 12 encounter.***

This is a dangerous encounter because of the clay statues' immunities to piercing and slashing weapons. Most of the bandits are unable to harm the constructs and instead concentrate on slowing them down and saving as much of their camp as possible. If either or both of their leaders arrives, the Black Tigers will rally to them and render any assistance they can through the Aid action.

Have the players make Spot checks vs. DC 20. If successful, they see a group of Black Tigers herding a lone figure away from the camp. It is Princess Kim Nan, and, if Black Tiger is present, she will break free of her escort and rush towards him, heedless of the danger. If Black Tiger is not present, she struggles free for a moment and calls out his real name (Yu) before the bandits get her out of the camp.

If the PC's have any success dealing with the golems, the Black Tigers will rally around them and help bring it down, using the Aid action to give attack bonuses and armor class bonuses to any heroes with the ability to harm the construct. There are a total of 50 bandits (4th Level Rangers), though at this point 15 are seriously injured. ***Use the stats for the Chiang Warden Officers. The seriously injured are down to 6 hit points.***

Confrontation with the Princess

After the heroes destroy the golems, the Black Tigers gather around warily. Hands stay near weapons, and seasoned eyes wait for any sign of trouble from their former saviors. If Black Tiger is there, he calms his men. These brave warriors helped save them and deserve hospitality, not hostility. Kim Nan, still by his side, will thank the PC's for their bravery as she stands arm-in-arm with her husband. If Black Tiger is not there, Kim Nan will emerge from the forest and question the heroes. How did they find the camp? Where is her husband? What do they want? Kim Nan is worried that her father will send men to bring her back, and has guessed (rightly) that somehow, the golem attack and the arrival of strange heroes is connected to her "abduction."

Either way, Kim Nan makes it obvious that she does not want to go to An-Yung and marry Jan Wei. The Lim prince is a drunk and a murderer, and she refuses to spend the rest of her life in service to such a monster. She loves and misses her father but feels betrayed by the way that he casually sold her to a rival family. Kim Nan remembers her mother's stories about brave lady warriors and mighty martial artists and is willing to endure the hardships of such a life in order to

Black Tiger
4th Level Fighter/4th Level Ranger/7th Level Barbarian

Size: Medium (Human)
Hit Dice: 8d10 + 7d12 + 45
Hit Points: 150
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 16 (+2 Dex, +4 Magical Ring)
Attacks: Jiann +22/+17/+12/+7 Melee (1d6 + 8)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.
Saves: Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +5
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 15
Alignment: Neutral

Skills:
- Climb 10
- Craft: Weaponsmith 8
- Gather Information 6
- Intuit Direction 7
- Move Silently 9
- Profession: Guide 7
- Swim 8
- Disguise 11
- Wilderness Lore 18
- Handle Animal 10
- Hide 9
- Jump 11
- Listen 18
- Search 11

Black Tiger (continued)

Feats:
- Ambidexterity
- Improved Two-Weapon Fighting
- Power Attack
- Superior Two-Weapon Fighting
- Two-Weapon Fighting (Ranger)
- Weapon Specialization: Jiann
- Leadership
- Dodge
- Mobility
- Quick Draw
- Spring Attack
- Track

Special Qualities:
- Favored Enemy: Beasts
- Rage 2/day
- Fast Movement
- Uncanny Dodge (Dexterity Bonus, Flanking)

Equipment:
- Ring of Protection +4
- Jiann +2
- 100,000 gold worth of gems and coins (back at camp).

Very few people know Black Tiger's real name. He is a broad-shouldered, barrel-chested barbarian warrior in his early thirties with short, unruly hair, and intense, searching eyes. He is tanned and muscular like a commoner but dresses in colorful, rich clothing thanks to a successful career in banditry.

Black Crane
12th Level Druid

Size: Medium (Human)
Hit Dice: 12d8 +12
Hit Points: 69
Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 14 (+1 Dex, +3 Amulet)
Attacks: Do +12/+7 Melee (1d8+3)
Dart +10/+5 Ranged (1d4+3)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.
Saves: Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +13
Abilities: Str 16, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 12
Alignment: Neutral
Skills: Animal Empathy 16; Concentration 16; Handle Animal 5; Intuit Direction 10; Profession: Herbalist 16; Wilderness Lore 20; Craft (Trap-making) 15; Heal 20; Scry 15; Knowledge (Arcana) 7; Knowledge: Nature 8; Spellcraft 19; Swim 9

have the freedom for which she yearns. PC's will be able to discern no forms of compulsion that would force her to behave this way, and any divinations will assure the caster that her love for Yu (Black Tiger) is genuine.

If Black Tiger is not present, Kim Nan will want to know what happened to him. If the PC's killed Black Tiger and Black Crane, they will have to talk fast if they want to avoid trouble with the remaining bandits. If the heroes are convincing, then Kim Nan will clench her teeth and straighten, unwilling to cry in front of the men. She tells the heroes she will never go back to Pai-San and that she will not be sold off to a butcher prince for the sake of politics. She thanks them for saving their camp, but she will refuse to go with them. The Black Tigers gather around her for emphasis.

Kim Nan assumes that the heroes are working for her father unless they have made up

Black Crane (continued)

Feats: Combat Casting; Craft Magic Arms and Armor; Craft Wondrous Item; Track; Improved Initiative; Spell Penetration

Special Qualities: Trackless Step; Woodland Stride; Nature Sense; Resist Nature's Lure; Wild Shape (4/Day, Large, Tiny, Dire); Language (Celestial, Draconic, Druidic, Infernal, Sylvan); Animal Companion (Weasel)

Equipment: Amulet of Natural Armor +3; Gray Bag of Tricks; Boots Striding and Springing; 20,000 gold (back at camp).

Black Crane is a weathered man of indeterminate age. Of mixed Chinese and barbarian descent, he is tall and powerfully built, with long, unbraided black hair. He dresses in a homespun tunic and loose pantaloons like any commoner. He is a crafty fighter using the best advantages of the weapons and magic he has at his disposal. His weasel (Su Chi) is a constant companion and a fellow thief. Su Chi likes to bite opponents Black Crane is fighting to distract them, creating an opening for his friend.

a different story. She will offer them her dowry, a treasure hoard worth 100,000 golf, as a reward for saving their camp. She tells them they can return it to her father or keep it for themselves. She no longer cares.

If the heroes killed Black Tiger and Kim Nan finds out, her initial reaction is the same. She holds back the tide of angry bandits. Any heroes that could defeat Black Tiger, Black Crane, and the constructs would have no problems with the remaining bandits, she reasons. She offers the PC's her dowry but as blood money under these circumstances. She practically throws the treasure at them. They can keep it for all she cares, as long as her father suffers for killing her love. Then she departs, warning the PC's that she will fight to the death to remain free.

If Black Tiger is present, however, he will be joyfully reunited with his young wife. He will explain what has happened to his men, focusing on the Lim ambush and the Cornugon attack. Examination of the golems will reveal the markings of the Lim family as well. He thanks the PC's for their help but notes somewhat smugly that Princess Kim has clearly made her intentions known.

However, Kim Nan is concerned about her father. She will ask the PC's for news from Pai-San. Specifically, she will press them for information about what the Lim are planning to do. Once the PC's mention that her father plans to invite the Lim to Pai-San for the wedding and to help search for her, Kim will have a rapid change of heart. She does not trust the Lim and worries that traitors within Pai-San are arranging a way to get a Lim army into the city. She wants to go back to Pai-San but not to get married. She wants to take the Black Tigers and the PC's to protect her father. She loves him despite his attempt to marry her off to smooth over political rivalries, and she does not want her family to suffer because she ran away.

All the Black Tigers agree to accompany her, and Kim Nan asks the PC's to go too. While not exactly what they signed on for, the heroes should recognize that her proposition is a good one. If Kim Nan is right, the heroes will gain great honor (and possibly a great reward) for helping defeat a Lim plot. Even if she is mistaken, they only have to return her and her dowry to Pai-San. Keeping her there was not part of the agreement, and this is a good way to collect their reward without having to fight any more bandits.

With or without Black Tiger, the heroes will now have to return to Pai-San. They must return Kim Nan's dowry (or be hunted down as thieves) and help escort her home in order to protect her family.

Rampaging Clay Warriors (2)
Clay Golem

Size: Large (Construct)
Hit Dice: 11d10
Hit Points: 67
Initiative: -1 (Dex)
Speed: 20 ft. (can't run)
AC: 22 (-1 Size, -1 Dex, +14 Natural)
Attacks: 2 slams +14 Melee (2d10+7)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft./10 ft.
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +3
Abilities: Str 25, Dex 9, Con -, Int -, Wis 11, Cha 1
Alignment: Neutral
Special Attacks: Berserk
Wound
Special Qualities: Construct
Magic Immunity
Damage Reduction 20/+1
Immune to Piercing and Slashing
Haste

Berserk (Ex): As with all Clay Golems, there is a cumulative 1% chance per round that it will go berserk. When the PC's arrive, assume the fight has been going on for seven rounds and that the monsters have thus far passed these checks. The first round in which the heroes become involved then, the golems each have an 8% chance to go on a rampage. This percentage increases by 1% each round. Rampaging golems will attack each other, but they prefer to pick on things smaller than them and, thus, will only do so if a smaller creature isn't obviously available.

Haste (Su): Given that the hapless Black Tigers have been able to mount only a pitiful resistance, neither golem has used its Haste ability when the PC's arrive in the fray.

Chiang Kim Nan
2nd Level Fighter

Size: Medium (Human)
Hit Dice: 2d10 +4
Hit Points: 22
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 12 (+2 Dex)
Attacks: 2 Do +0, +0 Melee (1d8+3, 1d8+1)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.
Saves: Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1
Abilities: Str 16, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 18
Alignment: Neutral Good
Skills: Craft (Calligraphy) 6, Craft (Painting) 6, Handle Animal 5, Swim 3, Climb 5, Jump 5, Ride 6
Feats: Ambidexterity, Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Unarmed Strike, Weapon Focus (Do)
Equipment: Masterwork weapons, Ring of Jumping, 5 Potions of Cure Light Wounds, Golden Necklace of Jade and Pearl worth 10,000 gold

16-year-old Kim is a headstrong young woman with long, shiny hair and an athletic, graceful build. When the PC's meet her she is dressed in commoner's clothing, but carries herself with an air of nobility and fierce determination. She carries her two Do swords with her everywhere. She is a fiery beauty with a personality to match.

Act 4: Battle for Pai-San

However you get them there, when the heroes arrive, Pai-San is under siege. Smoke hangs heavily above the hill, and the sounds of combat carry across the open landscape. It is late morning. The city lies open, and soldiers skirmish in the streets. What began as a carefully staged attack has devolved into a running battle as the Lim forces have encountered heavy resistance from the well-trained, loyal Chiang army. Outside, 10 Chiang wardens are marshaling a large force of 100 peasant militia. They want to break into the city and find Lord Chiang and his household before the Lim army makes it there, but the Lim have superior numbers, and they now hold the walls of Pai-San. If Kim Nan is with the party, her arrival at the head of the Black Tigers will provide a great morale boost to the people outside the gates. If not, the return of the heroes will still be a cause for great relief.

The wardens report that the Lim arrived to help the search for Kim Nan the day before. Late that night, they sealed the gates and attacked, catching the Chiang guard by surprise. The wardens only escaped because they were outside the gates protecting the lake. The Pearl Festival has turned into a bloodbath as the Lim and Chiang forces battle for control of the streets. The Chiang have thus far been unable to breach the walls, but with the heroes' arrival, they believe they can make it inside now.

The Lim forces have stationed archers on the walls, who have picked off anyone who has tried to approach. Bodies litter the streets around both gates. On the walls, Lim archers pace back and forth, keeping a constant vigil and taking advantage of the True Seeing enchantment placed there. A number of small blast craters suggest that the Lim have used rockets to break up troop formations and bows to pick off the stragglers. Kim Nan wants to get the Black Tigers, the wardens, and the militia into Pai-San to help her father. There are basically two ways in. The attackers can charge through the town and try to rush the gates, relying on magical backup to take out the guards, or they can attempt to sneak through the streets without raising further alarm.

If the Heroes Attempt to Rush the Gate . . .

There are four Lim soldiers visible guarding the gate, two watching for enemies, and two manning a large gong used to signal an enemy attack. If the heroes decide to lead a charge against the gate, the two soldiers manning the gong will immediately respond once they

come into view. Thanks to the True Seeing spell placed upon the gates, attackers relying on magical concealment will be in for an unpleasant surprise. One guard will sound the gong while the other will immediately run off to make a report. ***Consider them both to have readied actions.***

The runner will quickly alert the commander of the Lim forces, Kuan Jiang. The vile wizard will initially detach a squad of five elite soldiers armed with one rocket each. ***Use the statistics of the Lim warriors from the river ambush for these soldiers.*** It will take the squad five rounds to reach a firing position, and it's about 1000 feet from the edge of town to the gates themselves. The walls of the compound are 20 feet high and made of stone. The gates themselves are crafted of heavy wood. ***Each round that the PC's lead the charge through town, the GM should roll 1d6 and consult Table 3-1 for results.***

Once the heroes reach the gate, they will have to contend with the Lim soldiers. The gates are sturdy and, short of full-blown siege equipment, can't be battered down by mundane means. The easiest way in at this point is to overcome the guards, scale the walls, and open the gates from within.

If the Heroes Attempt to Sneak in . . .

The other option available to the heroes is to try a stealthy approach. One method is to sneak through town, relying on mundane stealth skills to get past the guards and scaling the walls away from the gates. Chan Pao (if he is with the party) and Kim Nan also know of another way in.

There are four large cisterns located in town. Placed in open squares at the cardinal directions, these cisterns provide water without requiring a trek out to the lake. A fifth is located inside the walls, in the very courtyard of the Chiang compound. They are all connected to a small underground lake that feeds the surface lake through the spring. With sufficient light, a small group could make the underwater swim, get past the walls, and then sneak back to open the gates.

Any characters trying to swim under the walls will have to make it 100' completely underwater. The use of magic for light and for underwater survival will make the swim much easier. Once inside, the party will surface in a covered cistern away from the main compound, which is covered with a simple wooden lid that is not hard to lift. Battle rages all around. Characters taking a moment to observe the action will notice that the Chiang are outnumbered and are slowly but surely being pushed back towards the main house. The Lim already hold most of the outbuildings, and they seem content to simply grind the Chiang forces to death against the walls.

Regardless of how the PC's get a party past the walls, they now have to get the gates open. ***Getting past the troops is pretty easy for characters with good Hide and Move Silently skills.*** Most of the men are too concerned with the battle at hand to take notice of a group of stragglers.

A successful Spot or Listen check vs. DC 15 will alert the PC's to the magical duel going on between Kuan Jiang and Xiang Xiao, the Chiang enchanter. Unfortunately, Kuan Jiang is the more combative spellcaster, and he also came prepared for battle. Things don't look good for the Chiang wizard. Kuan Jiang is forcing him to fend off attacks by summoned monsters of all descriptions, slowly but surely depleting his magical reserves.

Lim Soldiers
2nd Level Fighters

Size:	Medium (Human)
Hit Dice:	2d10 +4
Hit Points:	23
Initiative:	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	30 ft.
AC:	15 (+2 Dex, +3 Studded Leather Armor)
Attacks:	Do +4 Melee (1d8+2) Longbow +5 Ranged (1d8+1)
Face/Reach:	5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 15, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 8
Alignment:	Lawful Neutral
Skills:	Balance 3, Climb 3, Jump 4, Spot 3
Feats:	Point Blank Shot, Track, Precise Shot

It may be necessary to remind the PC's that their primary goal is to get the gates open, especially if not all of them sneaked in. Each gate is a pair of large doors that opens outward. A heavy timber plank bars them shut. On a walkway above, the four guards watch the city for signs of movement. Periodically, the archers turn around to fire a few shafts at the hard pressed Chiang forces. It is possible for the PC's to sneak past the four guards manning the gate and open it from below, or for them to simply take out the four guards and then open the gates. *However, sneaking past these guards, requires successful Hide and Move Silently checks vs. DC 15 for all characters so engaged. Failure indicates they have been spotted and will have to fight to open the gates. Actually opening them requires two successful Strength checks at DC 15. The first to unbar the gates, and the second to actually push them open. Once the gates have been unbarred, any heroes engaged in doing so must make another Move Silently check this time at DC 20 to avoid being noticed by the guards before they can push open the gates. It will take two rounds to get them open, during which the Lim guards will attempt to stop the characters if they have been spotted. If not, the gates are open too wide for the soldiers to do anything about it before they realize what is happening.*

Inside the Gates

No matter how the heroes manage to breach the compound, the Chiang reinforcements will charge through the gate to defend their lord, catching the attackers completely by surprise. Kim Nan starts heading for the house, pausing only a moment to plead with the PC's to help her find and protect her family. The heroes should be very familiar with Chinese methods of torture and know full well what the Chiang can expect if the Lim are victorious. Feel free to be as graphic as necessary to get the point across. If Black Tiger and Black Crane are with the party, the Druid will notice Kuan Jiang and conclude that the Lim wizard was the one who sent men to impersonate the bandits and set the Cornugon and the golems on them. Black Tiger himself will join Kim Nan, never leaving her side.

If the heroes did not kill Kuan Jiang's Devil, but instead managed to dispel the binding enchantment, the Cornugon will reappear at this point, just as Kuan Jiang is about to finish off Xiang Xiao. Roaring in fury, the creature will charge towards the startled wizard and attack, first tearing into any monsters Kuan Jiang has summoned and then proceeding to attack the wizard himself. Xiang Xiao will take this opportunity to

escape, and Black Crane, if present, will take advantage of the confusion to approach unnoticed.

The PC's can stay and fight outside, go with Kim Nan and Black Tiger to find her family, or split up and do both. If they choose to stay outside as a group, Chan Pao, if he is with the party, will join them wherever they go.

The fight with Kuan Jiang is fairly straightforward. The heroes, Xiang Xiao, and possibly Black Crane and the Cornugon have to kill the wizard before he escapes or kills them. If the Cornugon is in the battle, it focuses entirely on Kuan. If the wizard falls and the Cornugon is still alive, it will once again thank the party for releasing it from slavery and quickly retreat back to the hell from which it came.

With their leader fallen, the Lim forces break and the battle quickly comes to an end. Inside, however, Kim Nan does not fare as well. When the Chiang forces finally make it inside, the house looks like a typhoon has come through it. Furniture is smashed everywhere,

walls are broken in, and blood covers almost everything. A seriously injured Kim Nan kneels sobbing in the courtyard, surrounded by the fallen bodies of her loved ones and many of the concubines with which she grew up. Dead Lim soldiers litter the house, and everything smells of blood and death. Lin Sung, Lord Chiang's right hand man, and Li Shin, Lord Chiang's chief concubine and Kim Nan's friend, are nowhere to be found.

At this point, the adventure is over. Once she recovers, Kim Nan, already a hero to many of her people, will try her best to put Pai-San back together. Though the loss of her family and her husband has broken her heart, she has no time to grieve for them. Adventure opportunities for the heroes are plentiful since Kim Nan needs help securing her position, and the PC's are all she has left. Kim offers the full value of her dowry to them as payment. The sight of the treasure reminds her of the loss of her family and her love, and she cannot bear to look at it. The party can stay and help rebuild Pai-San or move on, but those choices are beyond the scope of this adventure. Lin Sung and Li Shin flee in the confusion. They cannot go to An-Yung because the Lim would kill them, and they cannot stay in Pai-San. They will disappear into the wilderness, possibly returning in the future as powerful enemies for the heroes that thwarted them.

The party will arrive in the courtyard just in time to see Lord Chiang slumping to his knees over the fallen body of his wife and several of their younger children, his Kwan-Do slipping from his fingers. Two figures in black stand over him with their backs to the party. The woman is unarmed, and the man holds two Butterfly Swords, one of which is driven through the famous warrior's abdomen. Lord Chiang's Kwan-Do lies to one side, covered in the blood of twenty dead Lim soldiers. Kim screams as the man jerks the sword out of her father's body and the woman snaps the great lord's neck with a lightning-fast kick.

The two turn to face the party, revealing themselves as Li Shin and Lin Sung. Kim, devastated, freezes in shock. The assassins do not gloat over the fallen warrior. Instead, Li Shin offers Kim and the heroes three choices: surrender and serve the Lim, accept banishment and never return, or honorable death in combat. All three are better than the usual fate of political captives — death by torture. Lin Sung beckons to several guards who shove the five surviving Chiang children towards their eldest sister. The youngsters are terrified and gather around her for protection. Li Shin makes it clear that Kim's decision will determine the children's fate as well as her own.

Fighting for the Princess

If any of the heroes stay with Kim, the outcome is less certain. Leaving the Black Tigers to direct the Chiang forces, Kim rushes into the house, screaming for her parents and siblings, for her friend Li Shin, and anyone else who can hear her. If he is with her, Black Tiger tries to quiet her as best he can, but he is too late to prevent her from alerting any foes within earshot. ***Have the party make a Listen check vs. DC 15 to hear the sounds of battle coming through the central courtyard.***

When Kim learns of the battle in the courtyard, either by making her own Listen check or through another character, she cries out for her father and dashes out, drawing her weapons. If present, Black Tiger follows closely behind.

Table 3-1: The Charge through Town

Die Roll	*Encounter*
1	The heroes encounter pockets of Chiang forces that are still skirmishing in town. Add 1d6 Chiang wardens to the attacking forces.
2 - 4	No encounters.
5 - 6	The heroes encounter a squad of 10 Lim soldiers and one lieutenant engaged in looting, torturing prisoners, or pursuing civilians. Use the stats of the Lim Imposters for the lieutenant.

If Black Tiger is with the party, his eyes meet those of his young wife. All of a sudden, the bandit leader will fling himself on the remaining fifteen guards, flying into a berserk fury (his Barbarian Rage ability). Kim Nan

shoves the children into a corner and turns, shielding them with her blades and her body. ***Any other characters (PC's, Li Shin, Lin Sung, and the other soldiers) must make Sense Motive (DC 15) checks in order to act during the first round. Otherwise, they are considered flat-footed and may not roll for initiative.***

Once they can act, Li Shin and Lin Sung will press the attack, trying to go through the party to get at Kim Nan. With Black Tiger occupied, it falls to the PC's to deal with the traitors. For this battle, feel free to use popular tricks and stunts from martial arts movies. They are entirely appropriate in Mythic China, and they help create a sense of drama and larger than life conflict. The PC's will be hard pressed to defeat Li Shin and Lin Sung, but it is possible if they have been careful and smart. Li Shin and Lin Sung will not fight to the death. ***If reduced to one quarter of their hit points, they will flee, using everything at their disposal to escape.*** Anywhere in the house is a valid battleground, the courtyard, the interior, and even the roofs. ***Since the house is only a single-storey structure, getting to the rooftops is easy for characters with good Climb or Jump skills and the appropriate abilities or magic items.***

Do not pull punches in this final battle, though. It is possible for the PC's to beat the traitors, but it will probably require good planning on their part. Character death is a distinct possibility. If the PC's are having too much trouble, Black Tiger can drive off the guards and assist the heroes as the Chiang forces finally burst into the house and swarm the Lim elite troops. Unlike Li Shin and Lin Sung, Black Tiger will fight to the death, holding the traitors off long enough for the PC's to heal some of their wounds and get back into the battle.

If Black Tiger is not with the party, Kim surrenders. Keeping herself between the assassins and the children, she agrees to depart into exile with the children and asks the heroes to escort her and her family safely out. As she turns to leave, however, Chiang forces burst into the house and rush the central courtyard. They immediately engage the Lim and surround the princess in a protective wall of weapons. Li Shin and Lin Sung, their backs to the wall, attack, trying to force their way to Kim Nan in order to try and halt the battle. The Chiang try to fight their way out while protecting Kim Nan, but their progress will be slow. It is up to the PC's to defeat the traitors and allow the princess to escape.

Without Black Tiger as a safety net, this battle could be very deadly. With no one to help them, the heroes must stand or fall on their own. This is a hard battle against superior foes. Should the heroes fall, at least let them know that their deaths were not in vain as the Chiang armies overwhelm the Lim guards and force the wounded traitors to flee for their lives.

If the heroes defeat Li Shin and Lin Sung, a Challenge Rating 14 encounter, the battle for Pai-San is over. The Chiang have held onto their home but at a terrible cost. Kim Nan and a handful of children are all that remain of the proud Chiang family, and Pai-San has suffered severe damage from the battle. The task falls to Kim to try to rebuild her home. The Black Tigers pledge themselves to assist her, and her husband, if he survives, will always remain by her side. As a reward for their help, Kim Nan offers the heroes the full value of her dowry and a place of honor in Pai-San whenever they should visit.

Though Pai-San is safe for now, the city is still weak. As a border fortress, it needs strong leadership and experienced military leaders in order to survive, and currently it lacks both. One of the children, however, has a solution. Pointing to the heroes, the young boy tugs on his sister's belt and asks if they will stay and help Pai-San rebuild. Adventure opportunities are plentiful if the heroes choose to stay. Though the results of their choices are beyond the scope of this adventure, such an act would not go unrewarded. It would bring great fame and honor to their names, and the tales of their deeds would spread throughout the Three Kingdoms, ensuring their places as great heroes of Mythic China.

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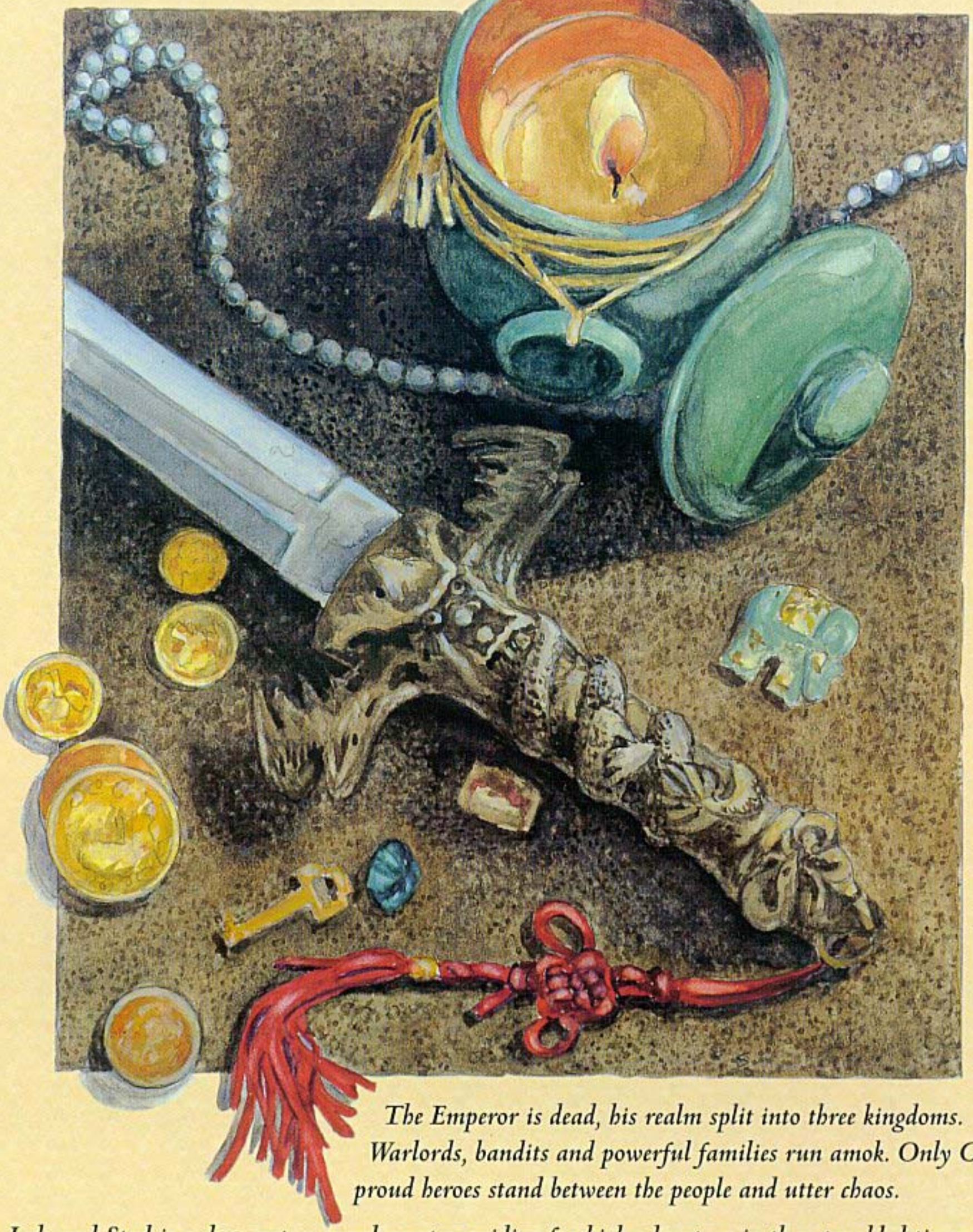

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